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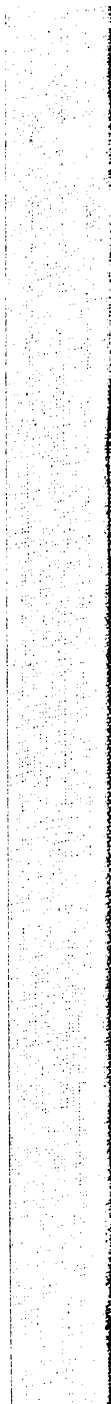
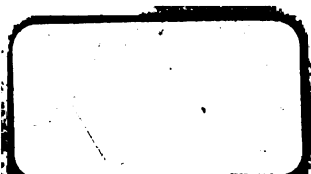
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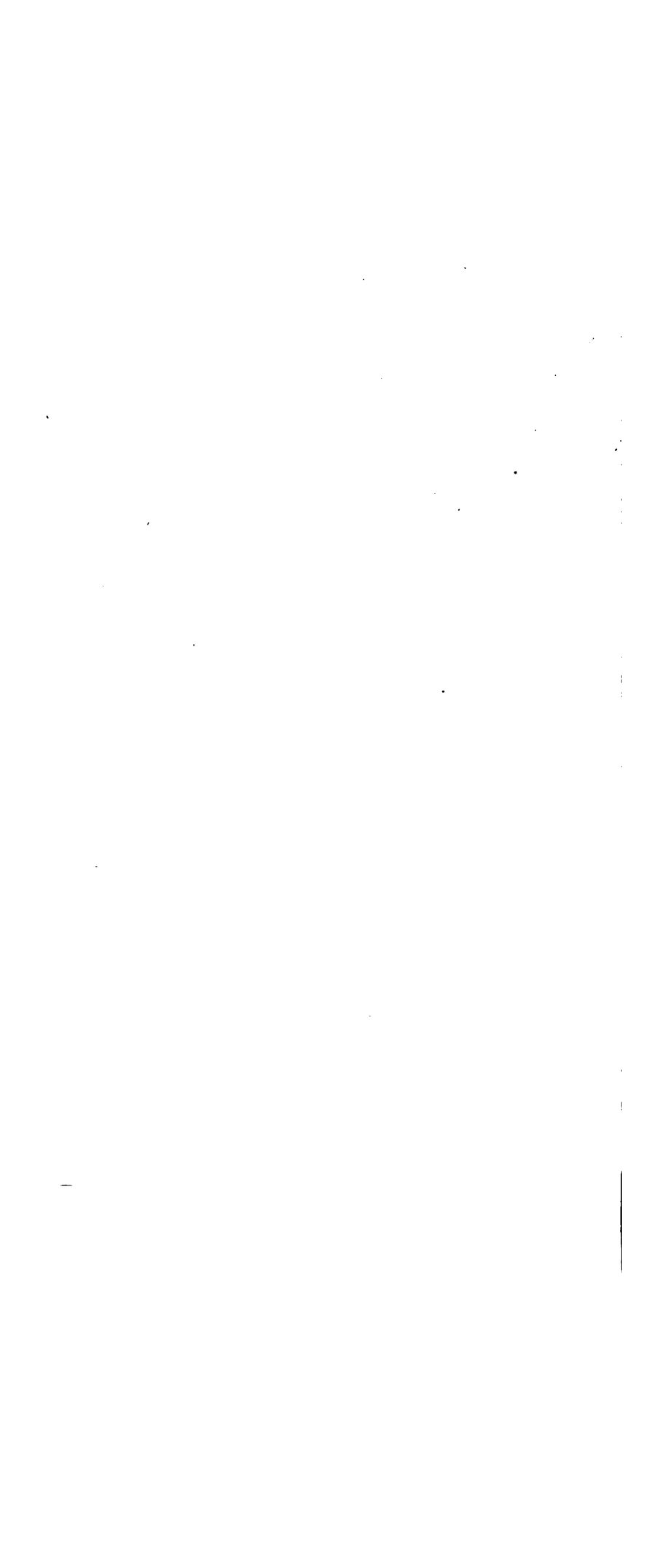
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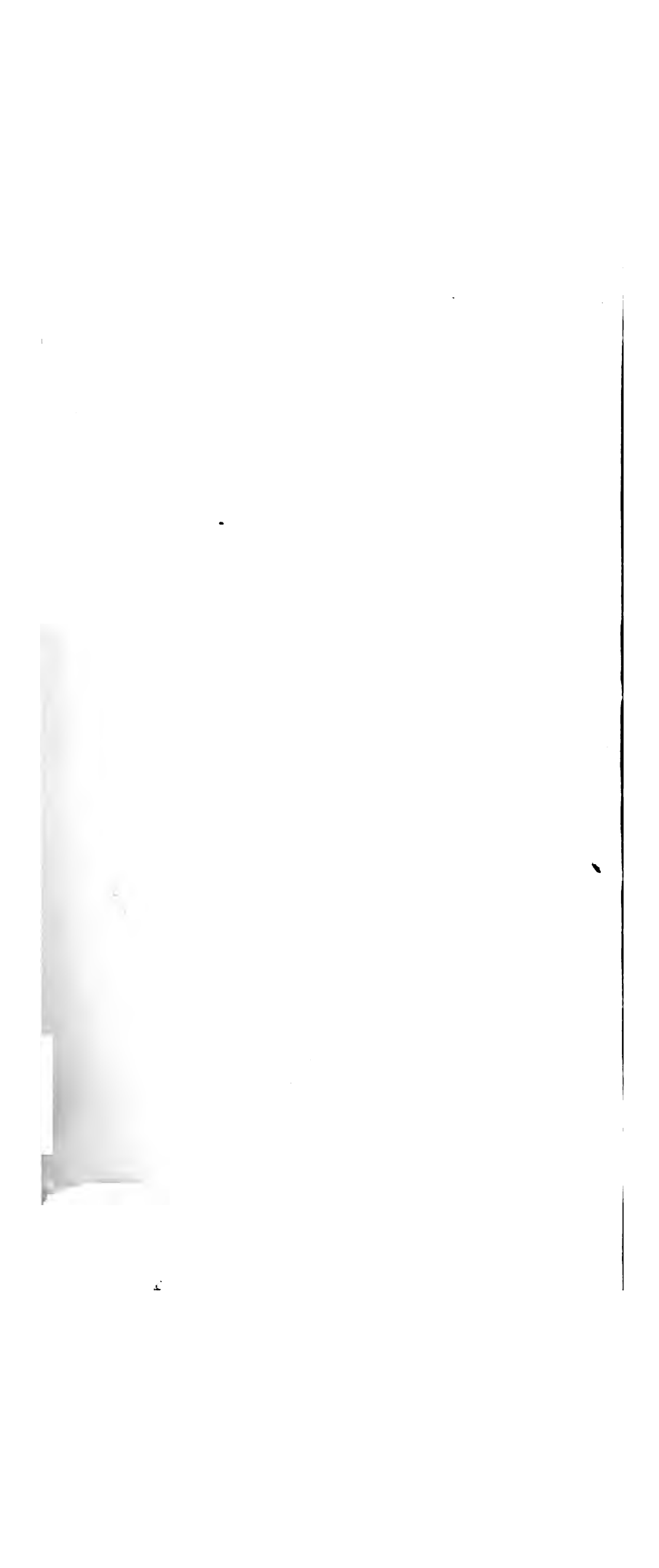




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# POEMS:

LYRICAL, AFFECTIVE, AND DRAMATIC.

BY

JOHN COMBE.

"It isn't writing verses nor painting a picture,—*that*," as Sir Joshua used to say, "everybody can do,—but it is the doing something that entitles the poet or the artist to distinction, or that makes the work live."—*Conversations of Northcote.*

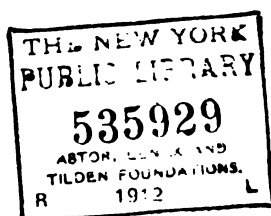
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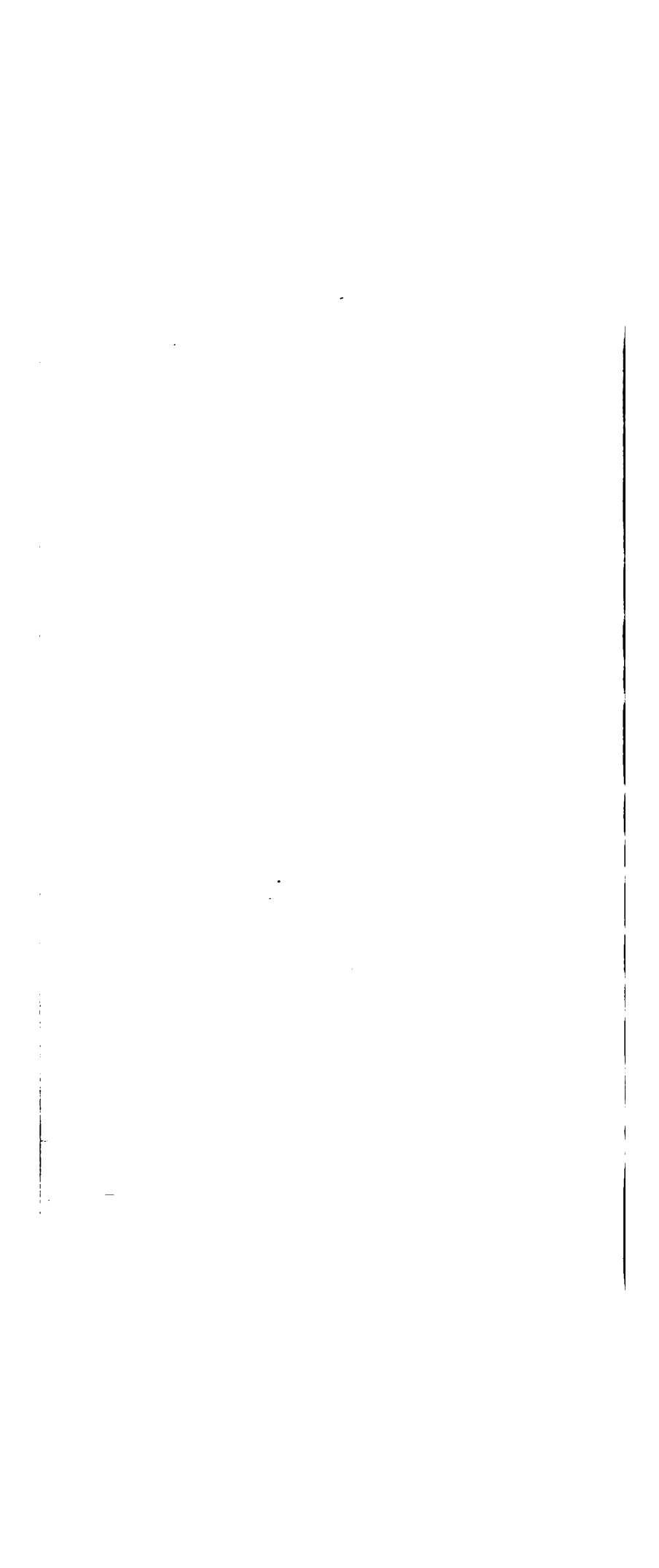
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## PREFACE.

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THE extreme abundance of verses of a quality of more or less respectable mediocrity precludes the authors of such verses from any pressing necessity that they should publish their productions. But the very same fact is a continual and urgent reason why the true poet, drawing from sources of a deeper and more genial inspiration, ought by all means to bring forward his revelations for the solace and refreshment of the world. The great difficulty is for the author of a Volume of Verses to distinguish truly of himself whether he is a mere dabbler in the shallow waters, or whether he has had access given to him to the fountains of a profounder and more pregnant truth.

Various portions of the present volume having existed as manuscript for the space of seven, ten,



twelve, and fourteen years, the author has at least this to say for himself, that he has not been hasty in coming to the conclusion that it was his duty to publish. And now in recording the deliberate act of his most matured consideration, he is not without a conviction, that, to some readers, this little work may reveal tones of a diviner and more melodious wisdom, and glimpses of a deeper and more significant truth such as may to some extent have justified him in the act of its publication. And he is not without a belief, that, in the very extravagance which distinguishes the concluding portion of the volume there may be something which the age will welcome, even as a rocky and fantastic bluff might be welcomed in the midst of prairie-gardens of wearisome and interminable luxuriance.

LEEDS, March, 1856.

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VERSES TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE  
THOMAS HOOD.

---

As, in the silence of the night,  
Some lone one, through the churchyard's gloom,  
Steals softly, by the pale moon's light,  
To scatter flowers upon a tomb ;  
So would I, from the faery bowers  
Of fancy, cull some wreath of wo :  
So would I shed those withered flowers,  
Where thou art laid, in silence, low.

It may not be, it must not be,  
The world shall deem, why thus I crave  
The tribute of a tear for thee,  
While scattering flowers upon thy grave.  
It may not be, it must not be,  
With these the world shall waste its care :  
For if they speak, they speak of thee,  
And not of him who placed them there.

Oh ! not in words of measured wo,  
With stately swell of rhythmic grief,  
Would I bewail thee, stricken low,  
Ere autumn's sun had seared thy leaf.  
Let hireling scribes assail the ear ;  
Let hireling tributes load the shelf :  
The honest, manly, friendly tear,  
Befits thee ; for 'tis like thyself.

The hearts, that in a rich robe's cost  
 Can count young eyes struck, stitching, blind,  
 These, these shall mourn that thou art lost,  
 With all thy heart, with all thy mind.  
 But though they weep, from year to year,  
 Thy music stilled in every tone,  
 They cannot shed the gushing tear  
 From fountains warmer than thine own,

The idle great, with feast and ball,  
 May wear their irksome hours away :  
 But stretch them stark, beneath the pall,  
 And who is greater, thou or they ?  
 With crimsoned cheek, and full-drawn breath,  
 They flaunt their gay existence now :  
 But shall they, on the bed of death,  
 Await their hour as calm as thou ?

The monarch, in his living pride,  
Is worshipped with all smiles and forms :  
But in an hour he's thrust aside,  
To death, oblivion, and the worms.  
But thou wert like a flower that spread  
Unfolding, ever fresh and fair :  
And though thy leaves and stem be dead,  
Thy fragrance fills the boundless air.

**PASSION'S PROGRESS:**  
**A SERIES OF LYRICS,**  
**IN THREE PARTS.**





## BIOGRAPHIC NARRATIVE.

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### PART I.

THE delineation of a Progress of Passion presupposes in the subject and delineator a moral organisation capable of undergoing the entire course of passion, and of representing the spiritual nature of man, in that state of final and complete development which the throbs and pangs of sufferance are the throes and efforts to attain. But it is only in that rich and rare conjunction of the elements of humanity, which constitutes the man of universal sympathy, or poet in the highest acceptation of the term, that we find this capacity to represent the full-grown and full-blown spirituality of our nature. Therefore it was a matter of simple necessity that the

subject and delineator of a Progress of Passion should be a poet.

The early life of the man of universal sympathy, the hero of the series of Lyrics before us, is not treated of: but it can be conceived and deduced from known laws and necessities of the case. From the earliest dawn of intelligence the life of the poet consists, mainly, in a silent absorption and assimilation of relative and significant truth: in a thrilling and wondrous apprehension of the beauty and grandeur of universal nature; in a passionate and weeping sympathy with the sufferings of our lost and wandering humanity; and in a continual and awful groping into the unfathomable mystery of life. The biographic interest of his career being chiefly internal and hidden from the world, by the world, as a matter of course, he is slightly and carelessly regarded. But by the favoured few,—perhaps a solitary one,—to whom his deep, earnest, impassioned, and imaginative nature discloses itself, he is loved and cherished, with an enriching and suffusing joy.

In the first lyric of the series we are given to understand that our poet is exiled from his native

woodland and ocean scenery, and immured amidst the smoke and drudgery of modern civilisation ; and we sympathise with the passionate aspirations after a diviner life, to which, out of the travail of his heart, he gives a free and melodious utterance. In the concluding stanzas, in the loftiest tone of feeling, he contemns the mere buzz of notoriety, so frequently mistaken for fame, and in three words, Freedom, Justice, Truth, points out the only cause in which a true man can expend his life-strength with perennial satisfaction to his inmost and divinest nature.

In the second lyric, a new phase of life has opened with dazzling and intoxicating gladness on our man of universal sympathy. With the suddenness as of an unexpected explosion of chemical elements, his whole nature has absorbed the irradiation of love, and he now seems to walk through life like a man enveloped in a glory.

In the third lyric our hero narrates the cardinal biographic incident of his early life, and incidentally discloses the internal and self-sustaining character of his nature. Obstructed and contemned for the present, he asserts himself with the indomitable confidence of a soul

permeated and vitalised by eternal and indestructible truth.

In the fourth lyric it is made apparent that a fond, and too often, fatal passion, has overgrown and absorbed the entire spiritual nature of our hero; and it is also made apparent that, except by the eyes, he has never spoken a word of his love; a very dangerous, and, as it will appear, disastrous predicament for a man to get himself into.

In the fifth lyric, the premonition of an indefinite impending grief tinges and subdues with a most pathetic melancholy the over-mastering passion with which our hero is possessed. Some incidental occurrence seems to have awakened his perceptions to the peril of his position, and verse by verse, and stanza by stanza, the infinite and passionate concentration of love pours itself forth with a half hopeless and bewailing power.

In the sixth lyric the fiat of fate has gone forth, and the poor poet, lost in the bewildering sweetness of his own imaginings, is ruthlessly torn from the object of his love. In the pang of sudden separation his rent heart bleeds out in melodious warning to his fellow-mortals, to beware of the fate which has befallen himself.

In the seventh lyric, in a proud and martyred spirit, our hero chants his farewell to his lost but beloved one ; and indicates incidentally that her heart had already been pre-occupied by a chosen loved one. The blindness and infatuation of the passion in which he has been swallowed up, is hereby made apparent ; and is also further indicated in the concluding stanzas of his proud and passionate farewell.

In the eighth lyric, our hero seeks to ease his grief by philosophising, in a very melancholy strain, on the chequered lot of the children of earth ; shewing forth that grief is as it were the inseparable companion and shadow of joy ; that the hopes and expectations of humanity are for the most part unfulfilled ; and that the end of his struggles and aspirations is desolation and decay.

In the ninth lyric, our poet, in a mood of playful fancy apostrophises the west wind, on its arrival over the Atlantic, as a gambolling and fantastic elf. The memory of his bereavement, however, crosses his imagination, and immediately the image of his playful and fantastic humour is assimilated to his darker mood, and turned to an illustration of his forlorn and forsaken state.

In the tenth and concluding lyric of the first Part, our hero gathers himself together in the strength of his heart, and accepts with a proud and martyred resignation, the loneliness and seclusion of his situation and destiny. He dwells on it with a passionate and mournful reiteration, shewing how completely the deep-toned longings of his sympathetic nature have been made to recoil in their disappointed sweetness on his bereaved but unbroken heart.

## PART II.

In the first lyric of the second Part, the heart of our poet, seemingly smitten by the universal gladness of returning spring, is provoked to a reassertion of his own peculiar desolation, more mournful, more hopeless, and more passionately despairing than any previous utterance of his grief. In the face of all the glad succession of the loves and labours of perennial nature, in the face of the exuberant freshness of spring, and of the redundant fruitfulness of autumn, the bereaved and broken destiny of our poet rears itself like an

ice-bound frozen peak, chilled by its very exaltation into a perpetual winter.

In the second lyric, the mournful strain of the preceding piece is still maintained, but the depth of despairing sorrow expressed in the former is now melted into a melodious and expatiating tenderness which seems disposed to amplify rather than to abate the desolation which it contemplates. In this lyric it is also somewhat significantly indicated, that though an indefinite number of years have elapsed since the fatal issue of our poet's initiatory experience of the love-passion, yet the heroine of the piece does not seem to have consummated by marriage her previous engagement with her alien but chosen loved one; and our hero even surprises us by contemplating the possibility of moving his adored lost one by the sad and plaintive tone of his expostulations.

In the third lyric, we are given to understand that a knot of small ambassadors, in the shape of a bunch of flowers, has either been deliberately despatched or otherwise incidentally thrown in the way of our hero by the lady heroine. What he thought of them when they were fresh and



newly arrived is not communicated; but after they have withered and faded, he seems to recognise in them companions in desolation. From the concluding stanza we are left in no doubt but that the sweet and tender embassy has fruitfully fulfilled its mission.

In the fourth lyric, we have an utterance from the passionate and unfathomable depths of the poet's heart, full of the most profound and tender significance. We gather from every stanza as it proceeds, that the lady of our poet's love, the heroine of the piece, has herself been bathed and steeped in that sea of tribulation by the margin of whose dark waters our poet himself seems as it were to have pitched his tent; and every verse as it flows seems burdened with the inexpressible and tender sympathy which the grief of our heroine has awakened in the heart of our hero.

In the fifth lyric, our poet bursts forth in a strain of the most impassioned and intoxicated gladness, his heart seeming to have been suddenly lifted up to the highest pitch of hopeful exaltation. Under the symbol of a golden gate hitherto inexorably barred against him, he celebrates the

now certain prospect of his immediate entrance into the paradise of impassioned love.

In the sixth lyric, in a dreamy apostrophising mood, we are floated away seemingly to the South Seas, and there the image of an island paradise of surpassing beauty flits before us in tempting but unapproachable proximity. But suddenly the dreamy image is swept from our perceptions by the blackness of a tropical tornado, the prolonged and ceaseless tumult of the ocean roars echoing on our senses, and we are left to imagine what new and tragical catastrophe has burst on our unhappy hero.

In the seventh lyric, our poet seems to sob out the very breath of his existence in a parting strain of the most unbending and sorrow-stricken resignation. Every verse reiterates the tearing asunder of our unhappy hero from the object of his love, from whom it would seem by some inscrutable destiny he is again compelled to part. From the concluding stanza it would appear that a sense of religious duty on the part of the heroine, and an irreconcilable difference of religious belief on the part of the hero, is the occasion of their separation.

In the eighth lyric, the poet again wins upon our sympathies by pouring out his griefs in a strain of the most passionate and despairing melancholy. With an iterated and reiterated wailing he casts himself down as it were on the grave of his hopes, and knows and seems to expect nothing but that he is to mourn over them for ever. At last, full of the tender recollections of his dreams, he blends the picture of their most blessed and hallowed fulfilment, with the continual repetition of the impossibility and hopelessness of their ever being fulfilled.

In the ninth lyric, the old self-sustaining fate-defying spirit of our hero re-appears, invested, however, with a grim grandeur and sternness of conception, which shews to what a depth the latent sensibilities of his heart have been stirred by the scourging lash of his renewed affliction. Into the midst of the awful sublimity of a midnight thunderstorm among the mountains, he plunges as into a conflict of reciprocal and congenial elements ; and he contemplates with a stern satisfaction the possibility of his own individual existence being blasted into annihilation, and of the story of his grief being sealed into oblivion for ever.

In the tenth and concluding lyric of the second Part, in a strain of softened and subdued resignation, the poet indulges in a melodious recapitulation and summary of his grief, indicating in every stanza as he proceeds, how entirely his spiritual nature has been swallowed up in a deep-seated and inscrutable sorrow. With a redundant fluency of illustration, he seems to relieve the burdened pressure of his heart by expatiating on the ever-present and familiar topic, and with a sad complacency dwells on the desolation of his most cherished and impassioned hopes. In the concluding stanza he depicts the object of his adoration as endowed with the most celestial and seraphic loveliness that humanity could assume; and anon, as she dissolves like a phantom from his grasp, his heart seems to burst with the returning consciousness of his bereaved and irrestorable desolation.

### PART III.

With all our poet's lofty and enthusiastic aspiration, it is too evident that whenever the opportunity occurred, the love-passion has mani-

fested itself as the dominant and central activity of his nature. Now the law of man's spiritual existence is, that his soul is to flow forth into ever-enlarging communion with the Infinite Divinity; whose will, instilled as a continual and holy gladness into the silent recesses of his heart, becomes thenceforth the central and actuating potency of his being. But our poet, whose mission pre-eminently is to fulfil and manifest the life of man in its highest and holiest development, is here, as we see, flying in the face of the law, denying his destiny, and at war with God: whereof this second confounding desolation of his most cherished hopes is a natural result.

In the first lyric of the third Part, some perception of this mis-centering of his life-scheme seems to have dawned into the apprehension of our poet; for after giving a powerful and poetical illustration of the impassioned opening and tragical conclusion of his life-experience, he suddenly casts himself down before the throne of God and implores the light and guidance of His will in the midst of the dark and inscrutable desolation which involves him.

In the second lyric, the heart-struggle of the heroine of the piece seems to be eating like a canker into the bloom of her youth ; and the poet symbolises her departing spirit under the splendid image of a star fading in the light of morning. He bursts forth into a triumphal chant as she wings her way into the regions of ineffable and eternal peace ; and concludes by shadowing forth the Ministration of the Poet in its loftiest and most sublime conception.

In the third lyric, the deep-toned tragic tendency of the previous parts is issuing in its appropriate and inevitable results ; and our poet tenderly and pathetically fulfils the last and forlorn duty of his love, by chanting the death-dirge of the ethereal being to whom he had addressed himself with so absorbing and impassioned an adoration.

In the fourth lyric, we read how the most trivial and insignificant incidents unceasingly point to the grassy earth-heap where the wreck of his adored mortality still haunts the imagination of our poet ; and how every otherwise unnoticed occurrence becomes to him a continual remembrance that the vast vague immensity of Life and Time has now, as it were, swallowed up both his grief and his joy.

In the fifth lyric, our poet illustrates with a redundant reiteration the brief and perishable texture of the Life of man; and in conclusion forcibly contrasts its littleness with the vastness of the Eternity into which it melts away.

In the sixth lyric, the poet pursues the train of thought of the previous piece by enforcing the consequent comparative littleness of the records, interests, and transactions of the world, when contrasted with the infinite Eternity on which they are momentarily depicted like an evanescent dream.

In the seventh lyric, our poet is still led onward from the theme of the previous pieces, to reason from the unsatisfying and perishable nature of the joys of the world to the justifiable expectation of a more enduring and exalted vitality to come.

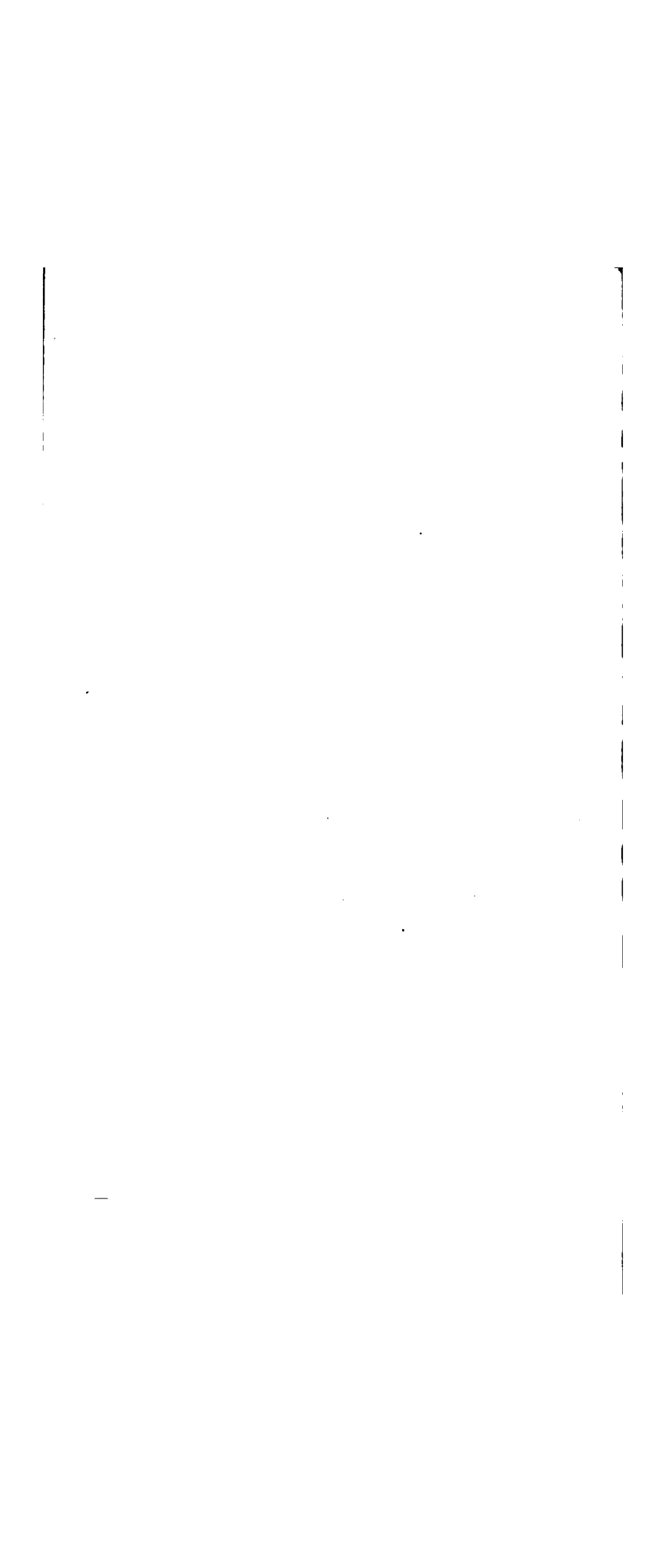
In the eighth lyric, the poet, quickened with divine and impassioned sympathy, bursts forth in thrilling and exalted adoration of the life and teachings of the Man of sorrows. In a strain of sublime and prophetic warning he proclaims to the globe-encompassing Principalities and Powers, that the fulfilment of the eternal justice of God is the only rock of their stability and endurance; and full of ineffable and holy ardour he hurls down the vain dig-

nities of earth as incomparably insignificant to the throne and domination of the universal Father and His ever-blessed Son.

In the ninth lyric, the last grand intuition of perfected spirituality bursts upon and suffuses the heart of our rejoicing poet; and the permeation and interblending of the human spirit into and with the Divine is revealed to him as the constitution and basis of the one only and eternal heaven.

In the tenth and concluding lyric of the third Part, and of the series, heaven seems to open on the enraptured imagination of the poet, and passing onward to the glorious consummation of his struggles, a choral symphony, resounding from angelic harps, welcomes the weary Pilgrim of Time, victor over Death and Sin, to the hallowed mansions of ineffable and eternal peace.





Love is a fickle game, which they  
Whose stakes are deepest, worst can play :  
And 'tis, like many other joys,  
Most valued when we lose the prize,

Pleasures, like leaves upon a lake,  
Elude the very grasp you make ;  
But swim along with careless force,  
And they will gather in your course.

But as the seeming strength of leaves,  
Caked in some eddy whirl, deceives,  
Deem not on fleeting joys to rest :  
Life is a pastime at the best.

— 4 —

## PART THE FIRST.

---

### I.

#### THE POET'S ASPIRATION.

---

I would that I were free to climb  
The mountain hoar, the cliff sublime ;  
To track the valley-winding stream,  
Far flashing in the eastern beam ;  
To rest me in the lofty grove,  
On ivy carpet, thickly wove,  
Where fields are green, and skies are clear,—  
For oh, my heart is heavy here.

'Tis not the puling discontent  
Of shattered nerves and frame unbent ;  
It is the love of Nature makes  
My bosom heave until it aches.  
To list where ocean's murmur swells ;  
To haunt the vale where beauty dwells ;  
These I have loved : these are not near :  
For these my heart is heavy here.

Who would achieve, in times so tame,  
An immortality of fame,  
Must to one only purpose bend ;  
Must live, or die, for one great end.  
And 'tis that time and fate deny  
To me such self-devotion high,  
That fills my mind with doubt and fear,  
And makes my heart so heavy here.

---

'Tis not the breath of vain applause,  
That I would court : a holier cause,  
The cause of Freedom, Justice, Truth,  
Shall crown my age, or drain my youth.  
For I have cherished glorious schemes :  
And I have dreamed entrancing dreams :  
And 'tis that still those dreams are dear,  
That makes my heart so heavy here.

II.

ALL SO GENTLE AND FAIR.

---

All so gentle and fair,  
She stole on my sight ;  
Ere my heart was aware,  
It was filled with delight.  
And my eyes ever turned  
To behold her again :  
And my breast ever burned,  
When she spoke to me then.

The skies, they are blue ;  
And the clouds, they are bright ;  
But they fade in the hue  
Of my passion's delight.  
The flowers on the lawn,  
They are fresh, ere they fade :  
But she came like the dawn,  
In her beauty arrayed.



III.

TIME HATH TOLD IN MANY A STORY.

---

Time hath told, in many a story,  
     Broken hope, and purpose vain ;  
 I have sought the Poet's glory ;  
     I have found the Poet's pain.  
 Met by cold obstruction only,  
     I have hid my heart's deep grief ;  
 Whilst, in wandering,—pensive, lonely,  
     I have sought, and found, relief.

Yet my heart hath never faltered ;  
Never trembled in the blast :  
Dreams of glory rise unaltered,  
Like the sun, when clouds are past.  
Dreams, too lofty to be spoken  
In a cold, regardless ear ;  
Hopes, too precious to be broken,  
Bear me, all neglected, here.

IV.

MY HEART HATH SPRUNG TO MEET  
THEE.

---

My heart hath sprung to meet thee,  
In many a raptured dream :  
And yet I may not greet thee,  
As love would best beseem.

Oh, I could fondle o'er thee,  
And clasp thee to my breast :  
And yet am mute, before thee,  
With passion unconfest.

And like a shield above thee,  
Oh, I could bend thee o'er ;  
And look on thee, and love thee,  
And love thee ever more.

My eyes, when they behold thee,  
Are inlets to my heart ;  
And surely they have told thee  
How dearly loved thou art.

V.

NO, NO, I DARE NOT LOSE THEE.

---

No, no, I dare not lose thee ;  
 Thou art all my life and joy :  
 From a thousand I could choose thee ;  
 For thee pass a thousand by.

No, no, if e'er thou dreamest  
 I could change from loving thee ;  
 Deeper sorrow than thou deemest,  
 Is that thought, from thee to me.

No, no, my heart is swelling,

Hours on hours, with love for thee ;

Love, those words are vainly telling,

If thou hast not faith in me.

No, no, my love could never

Half reveal its bursting store :

Though my tongue would speak for ever,

Still my heart would love thee more.

VI.

OH, LOVE IS LIKE THE BELTED BEE.

---

Oh, love is like the belted bee,  
 That hangs on buzzing wing :  
 Be wise, and touch him warily,  
 Or ye may feel his sting.

The honeyed prize will boom away,  
 Lost o'er the roaring river :  
 But in the heart the sting will stay,  
 And, venomed, work for ever.

---

Oh, never hung a bonnier bee  
On sweeter opening flower,  
Than waked the honey love in me,  
Chance passing, at that hour.

But never boy, with wilder spring,  
Released his prize in terror,  
Than I to feel the hidden sting,  
And know my fatal error.



## VII.

FARE-THEE-WELL, OH ! FARE-THEE-  
WELL.

---

Fare-thee-well, oh, fare-thee-well !  
'Tis not now my heart can tell  
All the passion, all the pain,  
All the love, it loved in vain.  
Though it may not choose but love thee,  
'Tis not now I seek to move thee :  
Hope hath left me ; and the spell  
Must be broken : fare-thee-well.

May the sun of gladness, o'er thee,  
Light the path of life before thee ;  
And thy chosen loved one, near thee,  
To the joys of earth endear thee.  
Though it be not mine to share  
All the love that waits thee there :  
Though in anguish I must dwell,  
Yet, in anguish : fare-thee-well.

Little known, and less believed ;  
By my fondness, self-deceived ;  
Can I hope that thou wilt be  
All my passion pictured thee,  
Smiling with those melting eyes?  
How the dear delusions rise,  
Which my heart still aches to quell,  
As I utter : fare-thee-well !

Yet it must be : and, for ever,  
Ever, ever, we must sever ;  
Every hour I near thee hang,  
Only whets the parting pang ;  
Every minute, lingered on,  
Dearer than the minute gone,  
Warns my sinking heart to tell,  
Ere 'tis broken : fare-thee-well.

## VIII.

## CHILD OF EARTH.

---

In joy conceived, in pain brought forth,  
Thy lot is chequered, Child of Earth !  
And be thy locks of gold, or gray,  
A night is ever near thy day.

If summer's blue spread o'er thee, bright,  
Lo, clouds have climbed the distant height :  
If morning's skies are gaily drest,  
The warning bow is in the west.

A storm-spent wanderer, thou art driven,  
By every breeze and blast of heaven :  
A pilgrim, knocking at the gate  
That never, never opened yet.

Thy golden hours of youth are cast,  
Like withered leaves, before the blast :  
And on the hoary waste of years,  
Thou bleakest, in the rain of tears.

## IX.

## HAIL TO THEE, GENTLE WIND.

---

Hail to thee, gentle wind,  
O'er the broad ocean,  
Puffing thy zephyrs,  
With tremulous motion.  
Art thou not wearied  
With tossing the waters,  
And waving the tresses  
Of old Ocean's daughters ?

From the far away West,  
O'er the heaving Atlantic,  
Come home, merry pilgrim,  
With gambol and antic.  
Earth's verdure blooms fairer,  
Where'er thou alightest ;  
And where thy lips kiss them,  
The roses are brightest.

So fond, and so fickle,  
So balmy and kind,  
Love is too like thee,  
Thou visionless wind.  
He descends on our hearts,  
Like a breath from on high ;  
But he leaves us forsaken,  
To droop, and to die.

X.

LONELY, LONELY, LONELY, EVER.

---

Lonely, lonely, lonely, ever ;

Lonely I must wander on :

Onward, like a restless river ;

Onward, onward, still alone.

Darkly, deeply, slowly, flowing,

Through the meadows I may wind :

Whence I'm coming, whither going,

Careless as the wanton wind.



Lonely, lonely, lonely, ever,  
     Lonely I must wander here :  
 Like a planet, resting never,  
     As it rolls from year to year ;  
 Surely, swiftly, dreadly, bounding  
     Through the track for ages told ;  
 In the gaze of stars surrounding,  
     Fair but fleeting, bright but cold.

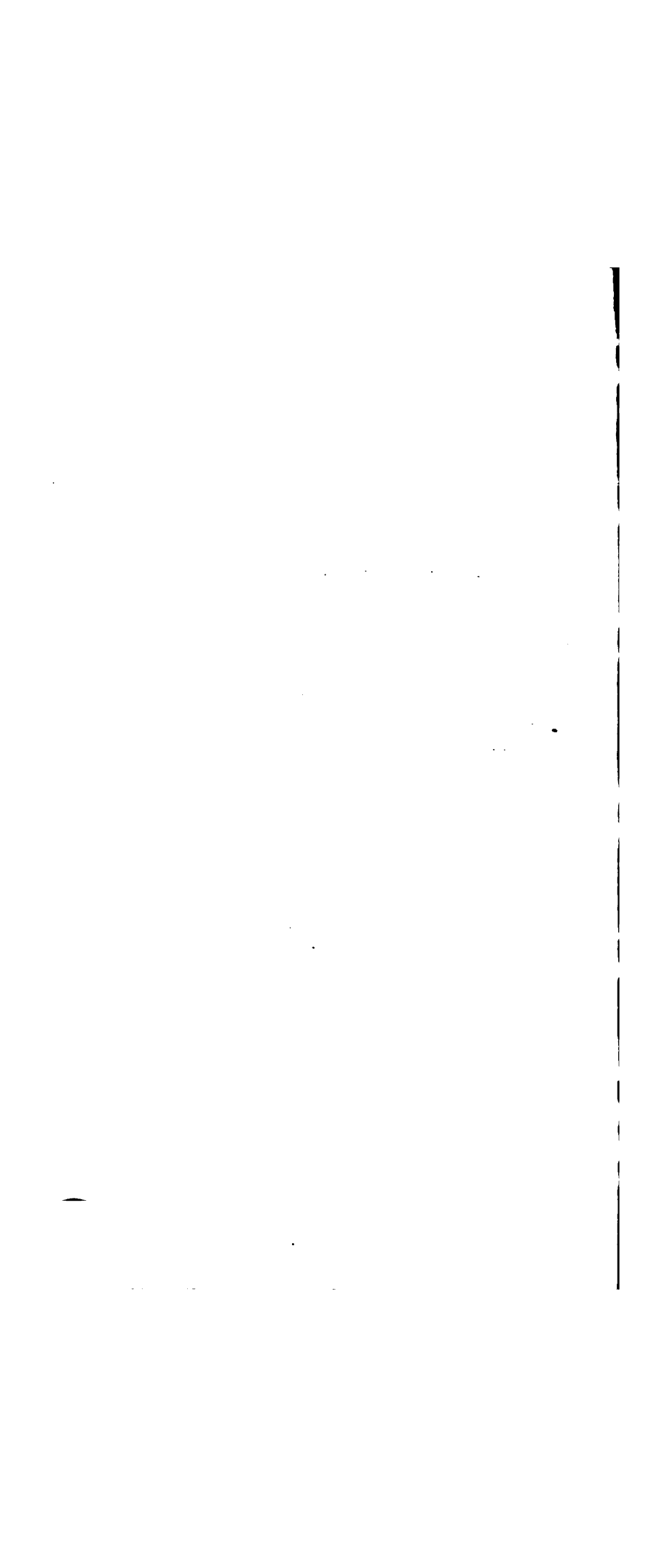
Lonely, lonely, lonely, ever,  
     Like an eagle on the blast,  
 With a proud wing I must sever  
     Clouds and darkness round me cast.  
 Upward, strongly, sternly, clanging,  
     O'er the blackness I am borne ;  
 Like a star in ether hanging,  
     Wandered forth to meet the morn.

Lonely, lonely, lonely, ever,  
    When the surge is rolling high,  
Like a rock, I'll stand for ever,  
    Gazing on the fitful sky.  
Like a rock in the lone ocean,  
    Lashed by ever sounding waves,  
I will bide my heart's emotion,  
    When the tempest round me raves.



A poet near his vernal bower  
Had sown two seeds of Fame and Love :  
And Love long bloomed a fragrant flower,  
Ere Fame's first tendril peered above.  
But clouds have darkened o'er the grove,  
And arrowy hail, descending keen,  
Hath pierced the willow shield he wove,  
And stricken dead the Poet's Queen.

And in the fall of cloudy eve,  
And when the round moon rose at night,  
The pensive bard would weep and grieve  
His cherished hope's untimely blight.  
But ah, where warmest teardrops light  
The opening bud of Fame appears :  
And 'tis a truth too sad and trite,  
Sweet flowers have sprung from bitter tears.



## PART THE SECOND.

---

### I.

#### THE POET'S INSPIRATION.

---

The hawthorn bud may burst anew,  
Refreshed by showers of vernal dew ;  
The opening rose again may bloom ;  
The lily breathe a fresh perfume ;  
The wanton warblers of the grove  
Reiterate their notes of love :  
But never, never more, my heart,  
Can thy untimely chill depart.

I feel it, in the deadly chill  
That damps what hope may linger still ;  
I feel it, in those hopes that burn  
Like ashes in the smouldering urn ;  
I feel it, in the heavy gloom  
That wraps me like a living tomb :  
I feel, I feel, my blighted heart,  
Thy winter never can depart.

The frisky lambs may leave the fold ;  
The fields may wave with autumn's gold ;  
The sun may climb yon azure dome ;  
The hind may lead his harvest home ;  
The waggon, cumbrous with its load,  
Attest continual bounteous God :  
But never, never more, my heart,  
Can thy untimely chill depart.

I feel it, in the ceaseless thought  
That broods o'er misery unforget ;  
Or, like a stone upcast in air,  
Still sinks i' th' ocean of despair.  
I feel my doom is living death ;  
Hope buried, ere departed breath ;  
I feel, I feel, my blighted heart,  
Thy winter never can depart,



II.

YEAR BY YEAR, MY YOUTH IS FADING.

---

Year by year, my youth is fading ;  
 Day by day, my life is past :  
 And the gloom of sorrow, shading,  
 Hangs around me, to the last.  
 Little thought I, when I entered  
 Love's domain, in fond belief,  
 Little thought I when I ventured,  
 I should turn, so soon, in grief.

Little thought I, years should find me  
Wandering onward, still alone ;  
Mourning o'er those hopes behind me,  
Darkened, faded, lost, and gone.  
Little thought I, I should bow me  
Down, in calm despair, at last,  
Careless what fate might allow me  
When my dearest dreams were past.

Ah, if years of grief could move thee,  
With their sad and plaintive tone,  
I would not thus vainly love thee ;  
I could move a heart of stone.  
I could string my harp of sadness,  
I could wake such notes, the while,  
Tears, upon the cheek of gladness,  
Tears would mingle with the smile.

I could, from my stores of sorrow,  
Mingle such a burst of woe,  
Mourners for the dead would borrow  
Tears, from their own grief, to flow.  
I could, with such power of anguish,  
Plunge into those sorrows yet :  
Brides, on bridal eves, would languish,  
With a strange and pale regret.

## III.

WHILE GAZING ON THOSE WITHERED  
FLOWERS.

---

While gazing on those withered flowers,  
All shrivelled as they lie,  
I think how hopes of happier hours,  
Like these may droop and die.  
And as those frail and faded things  
Are fragrant to the last,  
So round those hopes a fondness clings,  
When all their bloom is past.

And mourning as I gaze on them,  
They tell me still of thee ;  
The hand that plucked them from the stem  
Hath torn my love from me.  
Ah, if it knew how fondly there  
Love bloomed, with tender hue,  
That hand had never plucked it where  
Its gentle beauty grew.

Return, and in her bosom dwell,  
Ye gentle flowers, and there,  
Oh, whisper to her heart, and tell  
My withered passion's prayer.  
Tell her, the flower that decks the plain,  
Once dead, reviveth never :  
But faded love will bloom again,  
As fresh, and fond, as ever.

IV.

IF THOU WERT DREST IN SPLENDOUR.

---

If thou wert drest in splendour,  
 And I were by thy side ;  
 And we stood before the altar,  
 As bridegroom and as bride ;  
 Oh, wouldst thou then be happy,  
 My own, my chosen child ;  
 And smile upon me yet again,  
 As once, in youth, thou smiled ?

Oh, would thy heart awaken,  
With long-forgotten gleams  
Of youth, and love, and rapture,  
Remembered but in dreams ?  
Oh, wouldst thou seek in fondness,  
And find in me, at last,  
A refuge and a haven  
From all the weary past ?

Oh, speak it not in words, love,  
But look it with thine eyes :  
Or if a tear should dim them,  
Oh, breathe it then in sighs.  
But if thy heart should tremble,  
Ere yet that sigh be free,  
Oh, weep it on my breast, love,  
And I will weep on thee.

## V.

## THE GOLDEN GATE.

---

Oh, long I gazed,  
Where the portal blazed,  
Sorrowful, and sadly mourning my fate :  
But joy to my heart,  
With a wild-eyed start,  
I have found the key of the Golden Gate.

In my dreams I have seemed  
To grasp where it gleamed ;  
And I woke with the wild delight elate :



But this is the key,  
Which I feel and see ;  
Oh, this is the key of the Golden Gate.

I know by the gem  
That glitters on its stem,  
Like a star of the evening's waning state :  
I know by the swell  
Of my heart, full well,  
That this is the key of the Golden Gate.

Oh, fair and fond  
Are the scenes beyond ;  
And bright are the bowers where the angels wait :  
Oh, joy to my heart,  
When it rolls apart ;  
I have found the key of the Golden Gate.

## VI.

## BEAUTIFUL ISLE.

---

Beautiful Isle, on the fair blue sea,  
Wilt thou be a home to my bark and me ?  
With thy emerald turf, and thy waving trees,  
That nod to the surf of the rolling seas,  
With their palmy leaves, hung glittering high,  
In the slanting beams of the cloudless sky :  
Beautiful Isle ! oh, wilt thou be  
A haven home to my bark and me ?

Far have we seen thee, far have we sought,  
 On the restless seas, for thy lonely spot ;  
 Like a star of the evening, it shone on the rim  
 Of the round blue main, when the sky grew dim ;  
 Like the peak of a paradise, sunk in the blue,  
 It lured us afar with its vernal hue.  
 Beautiful Isle, on the fair blue sea,  
 Wilt thou be a home to my bark and me ?

Beautiful Isle, through rocks and foam,  
 We came to thee for a haven home :  
 Through the scowling rack and the blackening sea,  
 Beautiful Isle, we came to thee ;  
 Shattered and buffeted, weary and worn ;  
 Covered with surf, with the rude rocks torn :  
 Beautiful Isle ! oh, wilt thou be  
 A haven home to my bark and me ?

Beautiful Isle, on the fair blue sea,  
Where art thou vanished to ? Where ? Ah, me !  
There is darkness above, there is tempest below ;  
There is crashing and foaming wherever we go :  
The gleam of the lightning, the flash of the surf,  
Come blinding my eyes as they look for thy turf ;  
And the roar of the thunder, the crash of the sea,  
Are pealing the knell of my bark and me.

## VII.

GO, GO, IN GRIEF I MET THEE.

---

Go, go, in grief I met Thee ;

And in grief to part is meet :

Go, go, and I'll forget thee—

When my heart forgets to beat.

Go, go, though I had never

Thought, or wished, to part for aye :

Go, go, and if for ever,

'Tis not mine to bid thee stay.

Go, go, for thou hast spoken  
 Words I cannot brook from thee ;  
 Go, go, for thou hast broken  
 Every tie 'twixt thee and me.  
 Go, go, then, if I dare not  
 Speak unflattering truth to thee :  
 Go, go, for I can bear not  
 Aught but truth 'twixt thee and me.

Go, go, and when thou'rt kneeling,  
 Deem that heaven approves the deed :  
 Go, go, though every feeling  
 Of my heart, all torn, will bleed.  
 Go, go, and mourn I met thee,  
 Since, in truth, we ne'er can meet :  
 Go, go, and I'll forget thee,  
 When my heart forgets to beat.

## VIII.

## OH, COULD I WEEP AWAY.

---

Oh, could I weep away  
My life, and be again  
The cold and senseless clay  
From which I came in vain ;  
    I would not mourn,  
    I would not burn,  
With hopeless love for thee ;  
    I would not wear  
    My heart with care,  
That thou forsakest me.

Oh, could I lay me down  
Upon the cold, cold earth,  
And freeze into a stone ;  
I would not mar thy mirth  
    With looks so sad,  
    When all are glad ;  
I would not ever mourn,  
    With dying heart,  
    That joys depart,  
And ne'er, oh, ne'er return.

Oh, could I lay my head  
Upon the cold, cold grave ;  
And find, among the dead,  
The rest life never gave :  
    I would not cast  
    My eyes, at last,  
In weary dolour forth ;



I would not start,  
When lone apart,  
To hear the voice of mirth.

Oh, on thy bosom fair,  
I could have laid my head ;  
But never, never, there  
Shall my fond tears be shed.  
No hope of mine  
Shall blend with thine ;  
No grief be sighed away ;  
No sound of cheer,  
Made doubly dear ;  
No love, no hope, no stay.

IX.

THERE IS DREARINESS BEFORE ME.

---

There is dreariness before me,  
 Desolation lies behind ;  
 The gleaming rack is grumbling o'er me,  
 Echoes to my mind.

Hark, the sounding clouds are pealing,  
 Hark, the mountains' throats reply :  
 Methinks, it were a noble feeling  
 In their strife to die.

In the midnight thunder's rattle,  
When the sky was murk as hell,  
'Twas in the dread tornado's battle,  
They would say, he fell.

They would never know the sorrow,  
They would never sound the care,  
That led him through its gloom, to borrow  
Light to his despair.

## X.

## MINE HATH BEEN A SILENT SORROW.

---

Mine hath been a silent sorrow ;  
    Mine hath been an inward grief ;  
With an eye, that in the morrow,  
    Saw, nor sought for, no relief.  
Mine hath been a brow o'erclouded,  
    When it seemed but gay the while ;  
Mine hath been a sorrow shrouded  
    With the whiteness of a smile.

Mine hath been a grief that, growing,

    Branched into luxuriant woe ;

Mine hath been a wound that flowing,

    Found a sad relief to flow.

Mine hath been a sorrow shedding

    Tears that did more weeping crave ;

Mine hath been an anguish spreading,

    Like the verdure of the grave.

Mine hath been a dream beguiling,

    When the light of hope was fled ;

Like a fair-browed infant smiling

    In the chamber of the dead.

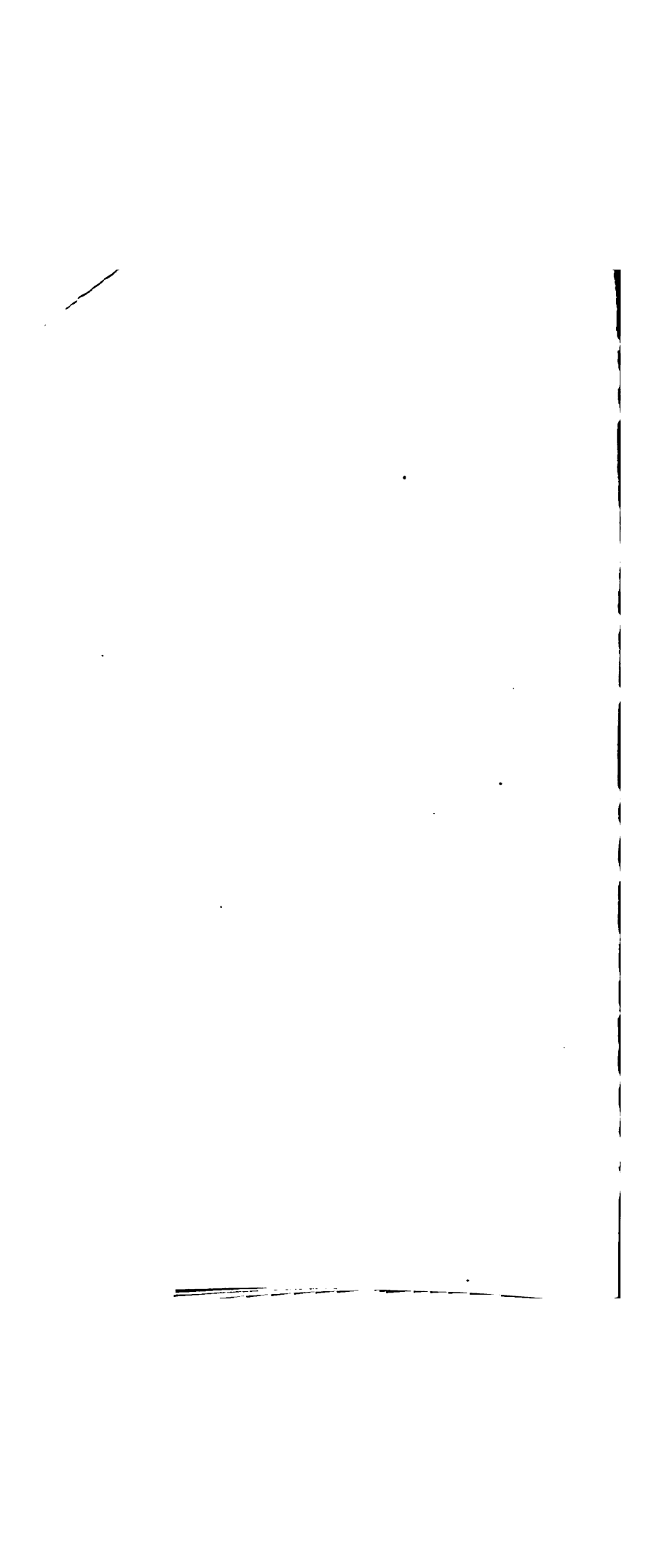
Mine hath been a lone sojourning,

    Wandered on without an aim ;

Save the fond gaze, ever turning,

    For the friend who never came.

Mine hath been a raptured dreaming  
Of a fond and gentle bride ;  
Perished, as I caught the gleaming  
Of her soft eyes, by my side.  
And her white robes, like a token  
Of her sinless soul's array :  
Oh, my heart, art thou not broken,  
As she fades, and fades away ?

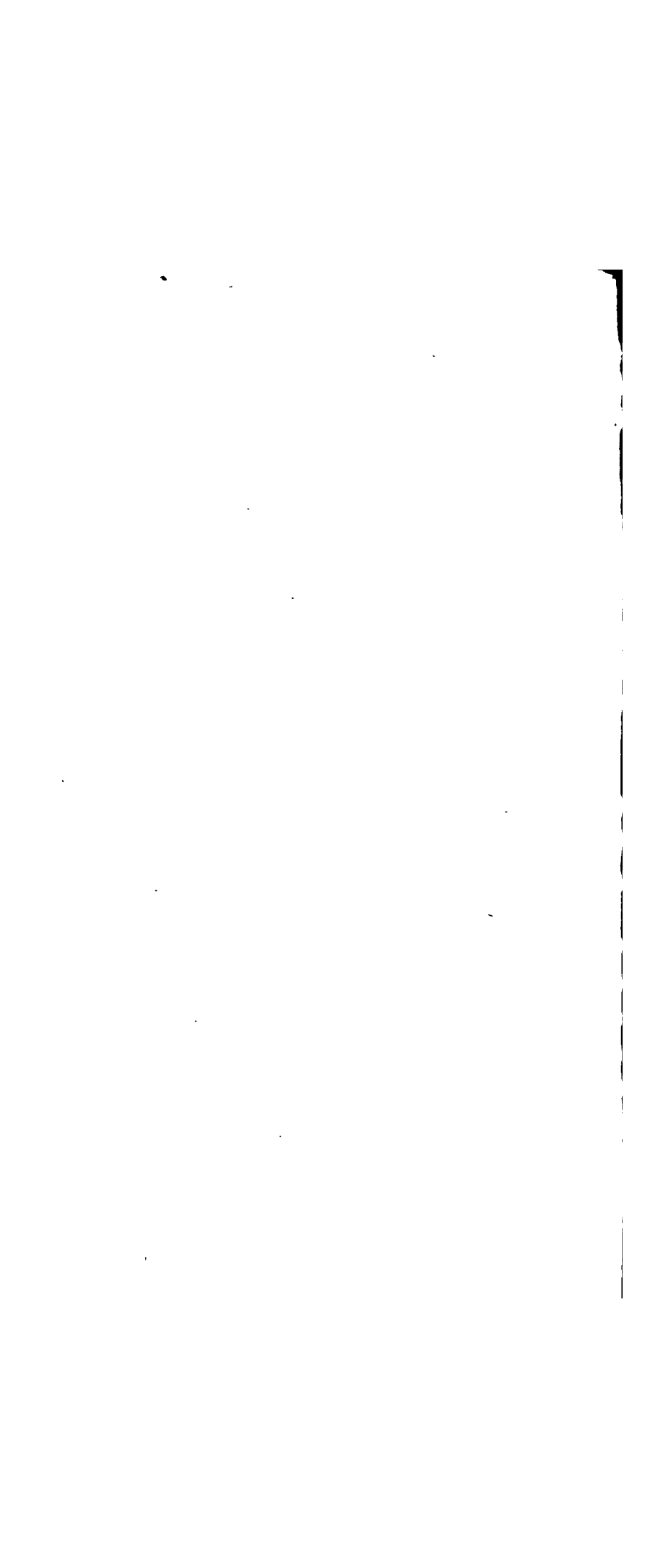


When the heaven-sent comes,  
Nor trumpet nor drums  
May herald him on to his throne :  
Like a cloud in the night,  
With his lightning freight,  
He cometh, in silence, alone.

Though the darkness be deep  
Where the way-farers sleep,  
And the stillness be awful around ;  
In the gleam and the flash,  
In the roar and the crash,  
They shall start from their slumber profound.

Every heart in its seat,  
With wild frenzy shall beat ;  
Every eye in its socket shall glare,  
As the thunders boom  
In the rolling gloom,  
Like the knell of Creation there.





## PART THE THIRD.

---

### I.

#### THE POET'S MINISTRATION.

---

The rugged clouds that clasp the sky  
Look grimly down in rolling by :  
But darker down the gulf of years  
My gloomy wreck of life appears.  
The winter of a weary grief,  
In ice hath froze me, stem and leaf ;  
And though the thawing beams appear,  
My stem is shrunk, my leaf is sear.

Yon setting sun, remote and slow,  
Sinking with melancholy glow,  
Rose with a flushed and purple power,  
Exulting in his early hour.  
His bursting radiance did adorn  
The mountain tops with golden morn ;  
And on the dew-sprènt steaming lawn  
Poured gushes of rejoicing dawn.

Such was my youth's dear dream of love ;  
So burst its radiance from above ;  
So filled my fond deluded eye  
With paramount and hopeful joy.  
Ah, wherefore must it sink immured,  
With black and struggling clouds obscured ;  
And with a murk and stormy night  
Close such a morning of delight ?

Oh, thou almighty Power above,  
If I have erred through too much love,  
Teach my rapt soul, devout with awe,  
The wisdom of Thy broken law.  
Unquestioned and eternal God,  
Who in Thy terrors art abroad,  
Give my dark path some glimmering still  
Of light and guidance of Thy will.

## II.

I HAVE SEEN A PALE STAR IN THE  
LIGHT OF THE MORNING.

---

I have seen a pale star, in the light  
of the morning,  
Grow fainter, and fainter, as the sky  
grew more bright :  
So see I thy spirit, our darkness  
adorning,  
Serenely and slowly dissolving  
in light.

I have seen the blithe lark, from his  
     covert up-springing,  
 Soar away through the clouds, like a  
     prophet of joy :  
 I have heard that sweet lark, to the  
     morning star singing,  
 And so would I sing to thy spirit  
     on high.

I have seen the same star, in the red  
     eve's declining,  
 From the crest of the mountain in  
     splendour look back :  
 So see I thy spirit, like a beacon-star  
     shining,  
 To win us to follow thy heavenward  
     track.

I have seen, as night closed, all the  
starry host wending

In the track of that star, o'er the dark  
mountain's brow :

And so would I march, with earth's  
millions attending,

To the Land of all Peace thou art  
leading to now.

## III.

HARK, I HEAR IT ; 'TIS HER KNELL.

---

Hark, I hear it ; 'tis her knell ;  
Come, and weep for Claribel ;  
Like a flower in spring she fell,  
                    Stricken by the storm.  
Oh, her youth was rosy bright ;  
Full of gleams and laughing light ;  
Ere that dark and cruel blight  
                    Gave her to the worm.



Stars, above her, weave your beams ;  
Flowers, around her, shed your gleams ;  
Ye shall mingle in her dreams

Never, never more.

Earth, resounding, cleave thy way,  
With thy freight of busy clay,  
Day and night, and night and day ;  
All her strife is o'er.

Weep, oh, weep for Claribel ;  
Day and night, she sleepeth well,  
In her dark and mossy cell,  
Where the violets wave.

In the silent midnight hours,  
When the moon majestic towers,  
Fairies from the bells of flowers  
Dance around her grave.

## IV.

THE WANDERING BREEZE ON THE  
BRANCH ALIT.

---

The wandering breeze on the branch alit ;  
And the branch was bended low :  
But her head is bowed down, lower than it,  
Where the fresh breeze ne'er shall blow.  
The violets fling  
In the opening spring  
Their purple fragrance there :

But damp and cold  
Is the wormy mould,  
Beneath those flowerets fair.

The willow droops, where the waters stray,  
As they wind on their foaming track ;  
And the dew it kissed in gladness away,  
It weeps in sadness back.

Oh, merry and sad  
Were the days I had,  
When my youth was in its prime :  
But my mirth is crost ;  
And my grief is lost,  
In the formless gulf of Time.

## V.

LIKE THE DEW ON THE MOUNTAIN, WE  
SPANGLE GREEN EARTH.

---

Like the dew on the mountain, we spangle green  
earth ;

Like the dew on the mountain, we melt into air :  
And the vale of our youth, and the spot of our  
birth,

Will forget that we ever hung glittering there.

Like the foam of the ocean, we leap into life ;  
Like the foam of the ocean, we fritter away :  
And the elements mingle again into strife ;  
And the yeast of the tempest boils up where we  
lay.

Like a cloud in the heavens, we float for awhile ;  
Like a cloud in the heavens, we are swept into  
night :  
And the sun will arise, and the morrow will smile,  
On ether as blue, and on vapour as bright.

The mountains are huge, and the ocean is wide ;  
And the clouds they are fair, in their sunset array :  
But the hour of our life, in the glimmering void  
Of Eternity, melts, like a shadow, away.

VI.

TALK NOT OF CHILDHOOD AND THE  
WRECK.

---

Talk not of childhood, and the wreck  
Of fading dreams it shewed :  
Our life is but a childhood, spent  
Around the knees of God.

Our science is an infant's lore ;  
Our history a tale :  
Our old age is a lullaby,  
And death its closing wail.

The Sceptre is a glittering toy :  
The Trumpet and the Drum  
But tell us that the infant hosts  
Are noisy, as they come.

All the exceeding pomp of Courts  
Is but a childish play ;  
A decking of their little forms,  
To pass the time away.

## VII.

## WE COME WE KNOW NOT WHENCE.

---

We come we know not whence ;

We go we know not whither :

We wake to a living sense,

But we wake not altogether.

And day by day,

As we plod on our way,

We have dreams of rapture fond :

But still, in their swell,

They only tell

Of happier scenes beyond.



We live and move in the present ;  
But we dwell in a far-off time :  
The balmy air is pleasant,  
But we look to a fairer clime.  
The shades of eve,  
As they slowly leave ;  
And the sun with his parting beam,  
He leads us on,  
From the day that is gone,  
To a land of a dearer dream.

The joys that soon depart,  
We love, ere they are o'er ;  
But they cannot still the heart  
That craves for something more.  
The dreams we dream,  
In their far-off gleam,  
Are bright with the hues of heaven ;

But they fade away,  
From the hour and the day  
Their full delight is given.

All hope, all joy, all fear,  
All sense of life looks on ;  
And tells us it is not here  
The goal of life is won.  
And lost are they,  
On their desolate way,  
Who seek in this sorrowful earth  
For the living joy  
Of a purer sky,  
And the hope of a holier birth.

VIII.

HOLY JESUS.

---

By that thorn-encircled brow,  
 Holy Jesus, let me bow,  
 Patient, meek, and mild as Thou,  
     In thine agony.  
 By those purple drops that flow ;  
 By those limbs of piercèd wo ;  
 By that agonised throe,  
     What am I to Thee ?

Wo to him who bows not down,  
 Meek to bear the thorny crown :  
 Wo to him who fears the frown

Of the godless world.

Wo to him who dwells in state ;  
 Judgment comes, though long and late :  
 Thrones, and Empires, earth-elate,  
 All are headlong hurled.

Kings and Princes, if your sway  
 Be not of the Just alway,  
 In an hour, and in a day,

Ye shall perish all.

Kingdoms, Empires, Indus wide,  
 Godless ye cannot abide :

In your Power, and in your Pride,

Ye shall surely fall.

Kingdoms, Empires, we have none,  
Save the holy, heavenly one :  
Kings and Princes, Father, Son,

We have none but ye.

Crowns and Sceptres all we scorn,  
Save the Crown of piercing thorn :  
In the hand the nail hath torn,  
Let the Sceptre be.

## IX.

THERE IS A MIRTH WHOSE HOLY  
SWELL.

There is a mirth whose holy swell  
 Need fear no chill of changeful earth :  
 For where the desolation fell,  
 That holy gladness sprung to birth.

There is a thrill that comes and goes ;  
 A motion of the surging soul :  
 And they can smile at worldly woes,  
 Who feel its impulse o'er them roll.

There is a rapture unexpressed ;  
A joy, a peace, a hope, a thrill ;  
Which they can only know, who taste ;  
And they who taste not, know not still.

Oh, Thou unuttered, Holy One,  
It is the consciousness of Thee,  
That was, and is, and shall alone  
Be all the heaven that e'er can be.

X.

WELCOME, WEARY PILGRIM.

---

Welcome, weary pilgrim ;

Rest thee, rest thee, here :

Death and Sin are scowling,

Baffled, in the rear.

Cloud-enveloped chaos

Dark behind thee lies :

Heaven's gate opes before thee,

Like the evening skies.



Past those golden portals,  
Angel legions, bright,  
Avenued await thee,  
Clothed in gleaming white.

Hark, their harps are mingling  
Tones of heavenly cheer :  
Welcome, weary pilgrim,  
Rest thee, rest thee, here.

THE FATE OF CLARIBEL:

A POEM,

IN THREE CANTOS.



## CANTO FIRST.

---

### I.

My first far back remembrance of this world  
Was sailing in a ship. How the waves curled  
And flashed in foam behind us as we clove,  
With mounting keel, the waters as they hove,  
And rolled in thunder past! And how the wind  
Rattled the cordage, till my untaught mind  
Grew tremulous with awe, and gazed on high  
To where the tall mast dwindled in the sky!  
I was an orphan then : I cannot say,  
Alas, that I was homeward bound. For they  
Who would have made it home, lay stretched afar,  
In the cold earth, beneath a foreign star.

## II.

How strange is kindness from the hands of  
strangers !

I, who had laughed at ocean's roaring dangers  
With infant glee, wept when in that strange hall  
Strange faces came with ready welcome all  
To greet me and caress me. But I wept :  
Nor slept for sobs ; and even sobbing slept.  
My widowed aunt was tremulously kind :  
I saw her tears though I was weeping blind.  
My gentle cousins with their soft black eyes  
Each tried in turn to win me to replies :  
But tears and sobs renewed were all my heart  
Responded to their gentleness and art.

## III.

Was it a prescience of my coming doom  
That moved me in that hour, and with the gloom  
Of sympathetic anguish clouded those

Predestined to imperishable woes ?  
 Was it a shadow of the coming fate  
 That darkened o'er me then : that as we met,  
 So might we part, in bitter, bitter tears,  
 The dark, thick, out-gush of a thousand fears ?  
 'Twere strange if man whose spirit influences  
 His fellow's mind even in its grosser senses,  
 Were not at times too subject to the power  
 Of the Eternal Presence. In that hour  
 I doubt not but the pregnant source of years  
 Disclosed its awful portals to my fears,  
 And, with a waft from its obscure recess,  
 Chilled my young heart with passionate distress.

## IV.

Oh, I remember how from day to day  
 I gathered thought and consciousness : and they,  
 My two fair cousins, were my only mates.  
 And with these two I passed the changing states

Of childhood up to youth : and from a boy,  
Those gentle girls, each an embodied joy,  
Peopled my universe. I had no eyes  
For other loveliness, nor did devise  
A thought but sprung from them, and in them  
dwelt,  
And made me all the feeling that I felt.  
I saw creation through them, and its hue  
Was passionate madness ; and I daily drew  
The breath of rapture as we lingered o'er  
Deep heaving thoughts, unknown, unfelt before.  
And with these two to wander thus at will  
Into the solemn grandeur of the still  
And breathing universe, made life a charm.  
Oh, I remember how each with an arm  
Entwined around me we would tread for hours  
The yielding turf all glittering with flowers,  
And with strange thoughts of things beyond our reach  
Puzzle bewildered wonder into speech.

## V.

And then it came that first I did discern  
That they were twain. With wonder you may  
    learn,  
But it is truth : for all along my heart  
Did never feel or image them apart.  
One sweet and passionate idea stole  
From their twin spirits far into my soul :  
For they were ever with me from a child,  
And when the one was glad the other smiled.  
Like strings upon a harp their mingled tone  
Produced one melody which, like a zone  
Of magic, twined my spirit till it sank  
O'er laboured with the sweetness.—On a bank  
Of flowers we sate discoursing, I between,  
When suddenly beyond the blue serene  
I saw black infinite night. There came a thought  
That in the waters of my spirit wrought  
A boiling whirl : and on my pallid brow



The drops of agitation stood. For now  
I felt as I had started from a dream  
Into an awful waking : while the gleam  
Of paradise that girt me paled away  
Into a blasted desert. Oh, then they,  
The innocent causes of the pang, looked wild  
With wonder on me. Rhoda, beauty's child,  
Of soft voluptuous sweetness, with an eye  
Of large dark swimming brightness, asked me why  
I looked so strange ? But Claribel had more  
Perception of the tumult at the core ;  
And in her deep eye there was strangely shewn  
A reflex of the wildness of my own.

## VI.

Then came the next strange passage of my life :  
The stage of choosing which should be my wife.  
For from that staggering blindness of the soul  
I calmed ; and patient study of the whole

Told me but this remained—To be bereft  
Of half my heaven : to have my strong heart cleft,  
And the divided fragments torn anew  
With every pulse of love that thrilled them through.  
Ah me, it was continual anguish thus to sway  
Between those twin attractions night and day :  
For when my thoughts were cloyed upon the one  
They hungered for the other. And the sun  
Was not more welcome to the expectant morn  
Than their joint sweetness to my heart forlorn.  
The soft-eyed Rhoda like a wizard's spell  
Still drew my thoughts away from Claribel :  
But with the crimson of her rich lip's dye  
I lacked the fire of Claribel's deep eye.  
Both would be lovely. But the woman's grace  
Of Rhoda scattered from her form and face  
Love's softest witchery : while Claribel,  
With less of beauty's luxury and spell,  
Shone in achievement. Rhoda's deep rich tones

Sang tenderly the melody that owns  
The heart's predominance : while Claribel  
Had given her searching spirit to the spell  
Of mystic poesy, and not in vain  
Had breathed the wildness of her own sweet strain.  
She sang of sadness with such plaintive tone  
As told how much the sorrow was her own :  
And in her tremulous accents there was still  
The import of an inner, deeper thrill.  
But gentle Rhoda in her calm smile told  
Her heart's whole history : and when she rolled  
The liquid fulness of her swimming eye,  
Or heaved her snowy bosom with a sigh,  
There was a presence and a power of love  
That overwhelmed the soul. She could not move  
But her voluptuous form let loose a spell  
To hearts that felt it irresistible.  
The stately Claribel in form and face  
Shone with a majesty of mind and grace

That stirred a loftier mood ; and when she threw  
 Her eye upon the heavens, there was a hue  
 Of saintly sadness shaded her fair brow.—  
 Alas, alas, the shades that shade it now !

## VII.

But they—they had no jealousy. Their hearts  
 Were all superior to the tawdry arts  
 Of rivalry. Sweet Rhoda felt no fear :  
 Her heart was satisfied if I were near.  
 She never wandered with a mystic quest  
 Into the future : in her calm fond breast  
 The present floated like a liquid sea  
 Lulled by the wail of its own melody.  
 Her mind was like a mirror to reflect  
 All gentleness and peace : or she was decked  
 With smiles from her own store when sorrow came.  
 But Claribel was of a sadder frame  
 Of temper and discourse. She saw the power

And spell of Rhoda's presence : but the hour  
Was never present when her gentle thought  
Could wish their influence less. No, she was wrought  
Into a tempered watchfulness by fear,  
But never welcomed Rhoda with less dear  
And overflowing love. Her gentle soul  
Guarded its own sweet dreams with strict control,  
But never for a moment sighed to be  
As lovely as her sister. No, thought she,  
I am myself, and if he loves her more,  
My prayer is still that Heaven in mercy pour  
All blessings on them : pile them till the heap  
Makes them forget that I am left to weep.  
Alas, poor Claribel ! Though she was strong  
In faith and contemplation, yet the pang  
Was stronger. Though she tried to image all  
The weight of dead despair that would befall  
Her spirit in that blow, yet her strong heart  
In all its strength could image but a part.

## VIII.

And now my good old aunt in reverend years  
Was stricken with sore sickness : and in tears  
We nightly prayed together that she still  
Might yet be spared us if the wiser will  
Of Heaven permitted. Rhoda in her grief  
Wept free and childlike, and had soon relief :  
But Claribel was shaken with such throbs  
Of anguish, and with such convulsive sobs  
Of aching desolation, poured her prayer,  
My mind misgave me of the deeper care  
That preyed upon her heart. She saw, she feared  
That the bereavement which impending neared,  
Would work some sudden change, and would  
impel  
My rousing senses to shake off the spell  
That still so strangely bound them. In her deep  
And melancholy musings she did keep  
Her eye upon the darkest till it grew

Into a fearful semblance of her true  
And coming fate. And when she wept at eve,  
That dark foreboding mingled to upheave  
Convulsive agitations which she deemed  
Would pass unnoticed as the thing they seemed,  
And well might seem, the tribute of her heart  
To the fond parent who would soon depart.  
But I who from my youth have had a strange  
And mystic power of fathoming the range  
Of others' thoughts, I saw the deeper fears  
That clouded o'er her till they burst in tears.  
I saw the utter hopelessness that fell  
Like starless midnight on her soul : and well  
I deemed her spirit battled with the gloom  
That closed around her like the night of doom.

## IX.

"Julian, my child," and from her dying bed  
My kind aunt faintly raised her drooping head,

“ Julian, my child, before I leave you here  
There is one hope that in my heart is dear,  
I wish to see accomplished : then I’ll die  
In peace, I’ve watched your young days floating by,  
With anxious hope, but I could never tell  
Which of my daughters you loved best : so well  
And fondly your young heart hath loved them both.  
Nay, do not take it sadly : I am loth  
To press the tender question : but before  
I die, I wish, my children, to implore  
A blessing on your love, whichever one  
Dear Julian in your heart you fix upon.  
Which shall your wife, which still your sister be,  
Tell me I pray : for I am faint and see  
The things of earth grow darker, and I feel  
I cannot long be with you : but I’ll seal  
Your tender adoration with a prayer  
That Heaven may bless you. Speak, my child,  
while there



Rhoda and Claribel in silence wait  
Your word, your will, your choice to seal their  
fate."

I bowed my head in anguish where I sate  
Fronting the dying mother : and thus late  
My heart became tumultuous with the sense  
Of power to choose, and yet of impotence.  
No mortal thing constrained me, yet I felt  
My better genius draw me to where knelt  
The gentle Claribel, while all my mind  
And thinking being told me I should find  
Abiding joy in her. But when I turned  
My gaze on Rhoda, and her soft eye burned  
Into my soul, and all her floating hair  
In dark brown richness motioned to me there,  
There sprang a power into my breast that swayed  
My hovering choice to her. I strove ; I stayed ;  
I dragged the future up, and bid my soul  
Consider it : but still that one control

Asserted high predominance, and filled  
 My heart with foolish fancies that I willed  
 My choice in freedom thus. Then it began  
 To picture all how pleasantly our span  
 Of life would then run on, when (this dark hour  
 Of hesitation past) I felt the power  
 Of love in all its fulness, and the glow  
 Of genial satisfaction. It did throw  
 Such witchery around me I did feel  
 Constrained as 'twere by this one act to seal  
 United hopes, while poor lost Claribel,  
 With all her spirit and enamoured swell  
 Of poesy, was blotted from my sight,  
 As the moon fadeth in the morning's light.

## X.

And yet I strove again : for still my heart  
 Could not thus dash away its better part.  
 I turned again where Claribel lay low,

And put it to my soul if I could throw  
Her weeping from me. To my heart there came  
The passion of a joy that hath no name :  
And in its gush I could have kneeled and made  
A vow to her for ever. But I stayed,  
Constrained by fatal impulse, and again  
That spell possessed me, heart, and breast, and brain.  
And powerless then I turned and drank the gaze  
Of Rhoda's eye until it seemed to blaze  
My blood into a flame : and then I went  
And holding her at arm's length as I bent  
My eyes on hers I gasped, " Wilt thou be mine,  
Dear, dearest Rhoda ? I am ever thine."  
My words recalled her wandering senses then,  
For with her eyes she seemed to ask again  
Why did I look so strange. Then with a sigh  
That flamed like lava through me, and an eye  
Of calm and full delight, she murmured " Yes,  
Dear, dearest Julian, all that I possess

Is thine for ever." With a burning kiss  
 I would have sealed the promise of my bliss,  
 But from the dying mother I beheld  
 A look and motion of the hand that quelled  
 My passion's ardour. "Come," she feebly said,  
 "Come, kneel beside me," and she slowly spread  
 Her hand abroad to bless us as we kneeled.  
 "May Heaven—may Heaven, in all the years yet  
     sealed  
 From mortal vision, oh, may Heaven—" she stopped,  
 And suddenly between our heads she dropped  
 Her dead cold hand, and the death-rattle closed  
 The broken blessing thus for ever lost.  
 Then Rhoda started, and began to weep :  
 And gazed on Claribel who seemed to keep  
 Still strangely kneeling. When we bid her rise  
 And weep with us, she answered not ; nor sighs,  
 Nor tears, nor motion came from her. Oh, day  
 Of darkest anguish : she had swooned away.

## CANTO SECOND.

---

### I.

Long in that deadly swoon lay Claribel,  
Without a motion or a breath to tell  
That life was not extinct. And when it came  
Again she was in such a gentle frame  
Of mind, it seemed the battle of her soul  
Was over in that trance. With such control  
Her will constrained her looks, and thoughts, and  
voice,  
It almost seemed as if she did rejoice  
With undivided heart that we were now  
The pledged recipients of a mutual vow.  
Yea, she did counterfeit delight so well

That we were puzzled in our hearts to tell  
 How she had been so shaken when the hour  
 Of hope's extinction crushed her with its  
     power.

And then those bursts of grief which she did  
     smother

In seeming sorrow for her dying mother :

'Twas strange she should so soon recover mirth  
 Ere yet that coffin'd clay was cold in earth.

Alas, poor Claribel, thy single heart  
 Was ill befitted for the double part :

Thy very fondness to be happy made

It more apparent that thy part was played ;

For in thy youth, and in thy childhood, thou  
 Did'st meet the morning with a pensive brow :  
 But now with mirth surcharged thou need'st  
     must smile

When shadowy eve would merrier hearts  
     beguile.

## II.

And many months were past : and we were now  
About the consummation of our vow,  
Our bridal. For myself, I daily drew  
Reflected gladness from the mirthful hue  
Of smiling Claribel. And Rhoda deemed  
In her meek heart that mirth was all it seemed :  
And with a gentle joy from hour to hour  
She blushed in beauty like a full-blown flower.  
If thou hast ever seen a form which makes  
The bosom kindle with the breath it takes,  
That form was hers : if thou hast seen an eye  
That left thee troubled in its glancing by,  
That eye was hers : if thou hast seen a smile  
That like a breath of music did beguile,  
That smile was hers : if thou hast had a gleam  
Of shapes of holy angels in a dream,  
Thy soul hath imaged her. But oh, my heart,  
How shall the utterance of descriptive art

Irradiate conception till it glows  
With the impassioned splendour which arose  
Like sunset round the fated Claribel ?  
Or how shall words of measured import tell  
The heavenly thrill that made the air rejoice  
In every tone and motion of her voice ?  
How shall my bursting heart again renew  
Her image in my soul ; and how she grew  
Into a spirit, losing day by day  
The form and aspect of a thing of clay ?  
How her eye kindled and her step became  
As lambent as the motion of a flame :  
How every lineament refined away  
Into ethereal texture : and the play  
Of heavenly thought on her impassioned brow  
Flashed tremour to the soul. Oh, how, Oh, how  
Shall I re-enter that dread cloud of doom  
That closed thee in its darkness, and thy tomb ?  
How shall I kneel beside thy grave, and weep



Those throbs of shaking agony that sweep  
My spirit like a tempest, and lay low  
Its rooted hopes?—Alas, the burst of wo  
Hath long been spent; and long, all shrunk and  
bare,  
Those hopes lie withering in the dewless air.

## III.

Oh, Claribel, oh, Claribel, no more  
Together we shall listen to the roar  
Of the wide waving forest, when the blast  
Breaks like an ocean as it thunders past.  
No more, no more, on the unruffled blue  
Of stilly waters, shall we track the hue  
Of pearly clouds that float like silvery isles  
Where the still depth of shoreless azure smiles.  
No more, at sunset, shall we watch the gleam  
Of evanescent splendours as they stream,  
Involving heaven in one wide blaze of day

That seems eternal—till it fades away.  
No more, no more, by starry night shall we  
Go forth and listen to the sounding sea,  
And watch its ceaseless waters as they break  
Their tremulous ridge in many a foaming flake.  
No more, when Luna steals into the sky  
With silent orb, shall we together eye  
Her wavering trail of ever dancing sheen,  
That paves with gold the ocean's sombre green.  
No more, no more, oh never more shall we  
Be that we have been but can never be.  
The light of morning shall not come again,  
Like heaven, with all its splendours in its train,  
To shed a daily hope and light of mirth  
On every hill and valley of the earth.  
The glory of existence shall no more  
Be kindled in our hearts as we adore  
The Eternal Presence of the Living Whole,  
That breathes sweet peace into the heaving soul.

No more, no more, the everlasting swell  
 Shall heave our spirits upwards, as a shell  
 Is borne upon the bristle of the wave,  
 That breaks and sparkles as the waters lave.  
 Oh, Claribel, oh, Claribel, thy light  
 Shall yet arise in splendour on our night,  
 A constellation, and a new-born star,  
 Raining soft influence on our hearts afar.  
 Thy presence shall descend into our hearts,  
 And teach us with authority the arts  
 Of blessed peace and interchange of love,  
 And all that fits us for our home above.

## IV.

And then there was that church scene, which can  
     never  
 Be blotted from my soul. My limbs yet quiver  
 With boding apprehension when I think  
 How gloomily in every gothic chink

That vast cathedral loured : and how the glass  
 Obscured with paint made the dim daylight pass  
 More nightlike through the sounding colonnade  
 That rung with every motion that we made.  
 I tell thee when at length all there we stood  
 Before the altar, such a gloom did brood  
 In the thick air, I gazed but could not trace  
 The breathing features of a living face.  
 Then like the summons of a trumpet rose  
 The voice of the robed priest : and at the close  
 Of the accustomed challenge which forthtold  
 " Let him now speak, or else for ever hold "—  
 I tell thee, as he spoke the words there came  
 Into that gloomy pile a sheet of flame,  
 Whose dazzling flashes shewed us round and round  
 As pale as corses. Then the sullen sound  
 Rose in the distance like an ocean's roar  
 With echoing crash, heaping and heaping o'er  
 The clattering roof such stunning bursts as rolled

Like judgment to our hearts : while damp and cold  
 The dew of terror stood on every brow,  
 And breath came panting difficultly slow  
 In every breast. I tell thee by that light  
 I saw the brow of Claribel all white  
 As chiselled marble : and o'er all her face  
 There was a written agony, a trace  
 Of such intense despair as made me blind  
 To see her buried misery defined  
 So vividly at last. Those heavenly eyes  
 Imploring strength and succour from the skies,  
 Those ashy cheeks, pale lips, and quivering brow  
 Uttered untold eternities of wo,  
 Of desolation, and of slow despair,  
 That mined existence : all was written there.

## V.

And we were wedded. On my bridal night  
 That face still haunted me : and like a blight

My expectations in their bloom and flower  
Were withered by the canker of its power.  
And like the gentle Claribel I too  
Assumed a fondness while the sorrow grew  
With daily power into my heart : I strove,  
And not in vain with artifice of love,  
To blind the gentle Rhoda to a grief  
Consuming beyond refuge and relief.  
My eyes looked strangely then upon the world,  
On the green earth, and on the clouds unfurled  
In flaky white, and on the mountains high  
That clove the depth of the pellucid sky.  
And in the once glad morning, I arose  
From sleepless tossings or from dreams of woes  
Of strange and rueful import, with a smile  
Of forced enjoyment which did still beguile  
The hapless Rhoda. Ah, she little knew  
While like a child she slept the long night through,  
What aching and interminable thought

Those dreary hours of long dark stillness  
brought.

She little knew how that seraphic face  
Seen for a moment, blasted every trace  
Of passion's longing, every hope or care  
From out my bosom : while it planted there  
A ceaseless intimation, and a weight  
Of dead despair, that told me, soon or late  
Some sudden anguish, like a midnight chime,  
Would break the spell that bound me for the  
time.

## VI.

She little knew how oft my heart would own  
A tender memory of the thrilling tone  
Of Claribel's discourse, when hour by hour  
In youth she revelled in her pride and power.  
She little knew how long-forgotten gleams  
Came back upon me as the daylight's beams,

Reflected from the purple east, are cast  
All sadly o'er us when the day is past.  
She little deemed in all her wedded care  
How day by day I saw the canker wear  
The wasting smile from the still placid brow  
Of Claribel. Alas, she deemed not how  
The spring of life was poisoned : and the glow  
That flushed her cheek was but the fatal show  
Of deep disease : and the elastic fall  
Of her free step the fatalest of all.  
She deemed not that the Blighter who hath  
    preyed  
On Beauty in its heavenliest bloom had laid  
His deadly finger on the glowing cheek  
Of Claribel : and how that in a week,  
A month, or year, or even in a day,  
Her heavenly spirit might be rapt away,  
And all her joyous hope and virgin bloom,  
Lie stilled, and cold, and senseless in the tomb.



## VII.

It was upon a quiet Sabbath morn  
When heaven was blue, and buds on every thorn  
Were bursting freshly green. The sun was up,  
And shone upon the margin of the cup  
That waited yet unfilled : when suddenly  
Rhoda exclaimed, " I wonder what can be  
Become of Claribel, for sure it is  
Long past her wonted time : " and saying this  
She thought no more. But as she spoke there  
came

A sudden flush and tremour o'er my frame,  
And my heart laboured as it would have stopped :  
For too, too fatally the words she dropped  
Filled me with boding dread that now at last  
The dark and fearful secret of the past  
Would flash on her perception like a gleam  
Of blinding lightning. Then, as in a dream,  
I rose, she following : and oh, my heart,

How shall the power and utterance of art  
Express the boding tumult of my soul,  
With strange emotion mingled, as I stole  
Into the chamber where poor Claribel  
Lay lone and loveless ! Or what words can tell  
My choking grief when I beheld her there,  
The pale and deathlike shadow of the fair  
Impassioned loveliness she once had been,  
With floating tresses bounding on the green,  
That soon would be her grave ? And when she  
spoke

In feeble accents, all my manhood broke  
In scorching tears to hear her as she told,  
With the calm gentleness that still controlled  
Her every look and accent, how that she  
Was strangely weak, not as she used to be,  
She knew not why. Oh heavens, still to the last  
She locked that fatal secret firm and fast  
Within her bosom. Such a love she bore

To her sweet sister, and to such a more  
 Than heavenly temper her seraphic soul  
 Had schooled her wild heart, she would still control  
 Its passionate impulse, though the wearing strife  
 Of heart and spirit preyed upon her life.

## VIII.

We talk of glory, and we vaunt the name  
 Of him who battles up the steep of fame :  
 But what a battle would it be for him  
 To curb the passionate throbs that overbrim  
 In his own heart ! The years of joyous fight,  
 The wrestle and contention of the might  
 Which in the end must conquer, cannot try  
 The heart so much, as to lie down and die  
 In helpless desolation. Oh, we wrong  
 The silent sufferers, when we laud the strong  
 And stubborn triumph of successful power :  
 For it was easier for it in that hour,

To overwhelm obstruction than to quell  
 Its own internal will. Yes, Claribel,  
 Thy triumph was complete : thy heart lay there  
 Bowed to thy sovereign will, and with no snare  
 Nor subtle wile could win thee to deny  
 That it must break and thou thyself must die.  
 Serenely gentle thou didst turn away  
 Thy hopes from earth since there they could not  
 stay :

Nor in their desolation would'st thou stain  
 Thy sister's bridal with a tear of pain,  
 When all was joy to her. If thou must weep,  
 At least thy loving tenderness would keep  
 Its sorrow to itself : and as of old,  
 Smile with the gentle Rhoda when she told  
 Her innocent heart's delight.—Oh, had she been  
 Less like thyself : less gentle and serene :  
 Less full of joy : less like a thing of heaven :  
 Less loving and beloved : I would have given

My heart to thee a thousand thousand times,  
 Ere thou hadst perished while our bridal chimes  
 Yet rung in heaven. But it was doomed. Why  
     keep

A closing wound still open? Or why weep  
 When tears cannot avail? Alas, why live,  
 If death in youth or age be all life give?

## IX.

My brother, life is such a thing as man  
 Hath little studied. Since the world began  
 Man hath lived mainly as an animal,  
 Too often deeming that such life is all  
 That heaven or earth can give him. And it is  
 Out of such life he talks of miseries,  
 Of hunger and disease, bloodshed and death,  
 And all the ills distemper gathereth  
 Around his grieving heart. Out of such life  
 He asks why evil is; and with much strife

Of logic balances the universe,  
And calls this thing a blessing, that a curse ;  
Expounds the laws of matter ; gives a name  
To every stock and stone, until the shame  
Of savage truth's untamed perplexity  
Is veiled with decent words from every eye.  
Out of such life we have a thousand fears,  
And insufficiencies, and bitter tears,  
And lamentations for we know not what :  
For all our misery is in our own thought.  
Out of such life, life is itself a thing  
Beyond the scope of man's imagining :  
Why it was given, why it is ta'en away,  
Are past his fathoming : though some may say  
With smooth lip-logic that there is a joy  
In life's mere animal humanity.  
Aye, and such logic may become the creed  
Of easy-going pilgrims : but indeed  
The kindled spirit hungers as it lives,

For more than such dull worldly wisdom gives.  
 And 'tis but as the spider who hath spun  
 His web in some old room, and what scant sun  
 May struggle in makes less : 'tis but as he  
 Hath woven his web that such philosophy  
 Is now permitted : and the flies that cling  
 With foolish fondness to so frail a thing,  
 Drained of their vital sap hang shrivelled where  
 Their trust is shaken by the lightest air.

## X.

Man of himself is nothing : and thus they  
 Who treat of man himself, and would essay  
 To teach his nature as a thing alone,  
 Fail utterly : and not until we own  
 The Eternal Presence, and perceive the Whole,  
 Can we discern a part. The human soul  
 Is capable of comprehending all :  
 And not until it breaks the total thrall

Of darkness, can it see the total light.  
We are as children born unto the night,  
And seeing all things darkly : but the morn  
Begins with shooting splendours to adorn  
The mountain tops. And when its glory o'er  
The dark horizon like a sea shall pour  
The splendour of its light ; and every flower  
Nursing its dewdrop, in that hallowed hour  
Shall feel the genial presence, and shall give  
Its tender charge unto its beams to live  
New life in the warm sunshine,—then like dew  
The spirit of man shall feel expansion too :  
And from the cup of his corporeal frame  
Where now its dead drop hangs, the coming flame  
Of truth shall free it ; and its floating glow  
Shall mingle with the universe, and flow  
Where'er the fragrant impulse shall be given,  
Soft as the breeze, and boundless as the heaven.



## CANTO THIRD.

---

### I.

Alas, my tale grows darker. Could I weep  
With earthly woes I would not calmly keep  
My tears in their sealed fountains : they would  
flow

With fresher bursts until the sense of wo  
Were drained from out me, and the rain of tears  
Had washed the furrow from my cheek. But years  
And years of deep, strange, ceaseless, fearless  
thought

Can teach such calmness as is seldom taught ;  
Or earth would less be what it is, a shrine  
For every worship but the one divine.

Why need I tarry o'er it? Wherefore hang  
 Upon the memory of that final pang?  
 The yet intenser climax of the woes  
 That deepened onward to the awful close;  
 And with resistless havoc smote me down,  
 As lightning blasts the eagle who hath flown  
 Against the storm, and dashes him where roar  
 The rock-chafed surges hoarse along the shore.  
 It was enough that it should come at length:  
 It is enough that Heaven hath given me strength  
 To rise above it, and attest it here  
 To shame the weakness of all grief and fear.  
 Why need I tarry? but that grief will flow  
 In its own course, and mingle with its wo  
 A thousand things extraneous which it tears  
 From wasted thought and on its bosom bears,  
 As flooded streams will gather in their way  
 The leaves and twigs that withered where they  
 lay.

## II.

Alas, poor Claribel ! Fast o'er her came  
The symptoms that her worn and wasted frame  
Was near its rest : and daily as she lay  
On her lone couch she wore and wore away  
Into a shadowy spectre of the prime  
And full-blown loveliness of former time.  
Her cheek and brow were wasted till the bone  
Throughout the pale transparent skin was shewn  
With deathlike prominence : but her living eye  
Flamed with a splendour which did still defy  
Clay-conquering death, and with immortal power  
Rose, starlike, o'er the darkness of the hour.  
And in her utterance she was still the same,  
Or even more joyous, as the smile became  
More ghastly on her brow. It was as she,  
As death approached, seemed more and more to be  
Elated into life : and in her mirth  
She planted flowers upon the very earth

Whose turf would fold her in her virgin tomb  
 Long ere the spring and summer of their bloom.  
 Those months that fledged o'er us then became  
 Inwoven strangely with our daily frame  
 Of life : and save that weekly she was more  
 And more enfeebled, they were sweeping o'er  
 As they would last for ever. Day by day  
 We sat beside her, wearing time away  
 With free discourse, more often gaily turned  
 By Claribel, as if the day we mourned  
 Were yet far distant, than so sad as might  
 Have seemed in sober sorrow fit and right.

### III.

And even then an under-current flowed  
 Of gentleness and love : and Rhoda shewed  
 Maternal promise, as if death and birth  
 Would interweave their mourning and their mirth.  
 Her time was fast approaching ; and the hour

Of Claribel, too, with resistless power,  
Was sweeping onward then. But Rhoda still  
Clung to a hope, with or without her will,  
That Claribel, so joyous, could not be  
So near the portal of the grave. Ah me !  
In her fond gentleness she dreamed of joy :  
And by the couch of Claribel her coy  
And bashful intimations drew the smile  
And tear of gratulation blent the while  
From Claribel's pale cheek. For even there,  
Stretched on the bed of death, she with an air  
Of most angelic gladness did rejoice  
To hear the trembling tones of Rhoda's voice  
Proclaim the coming joy.—Oh wretched mock,  
The preparation for the final shock,  
That like a boding tempest burst around  
With simultaneous crash, and in the swoon  
Of deadly stupor left me senseless there,  
The ruined wreck of all my hope and care.

## IV.

As one would visit, by the lone moon's light,  
The tombs and sepulchres, at dead of night,  
Of loved ones mouldering, so would I recall  
That scene which, with a shuddering, did  
appal,

As though a sheeted spectre had arisen  
To speak the secrets of its awful prison.  
Mortality is shaken at the sight  
Of its own ruin : but in broad daylight  
To see the living wreck, and hear it speak  
The incoherent madness and the freak  
Of its bewildered fancy, is a thing  
That mixes with that awful shuddering  
A blinding and inextricable terror.  
When mind returns us, like a broken mirror,  
Distorted images that wear no more  
The meaning and the fitness which they wore,  
Nor teach no more the subtle things they taught ;

Then seems it as the glory of proud thought  
Were dashed with folly, and the living ray  
Of mind itself could falter and decay.  
The body dies : but when the mind departs  
And leaves the body living, reason starts  
Aghast in wondrous awe and deepening fear,  
And feeling of how strangely we are here  
Compounded in our spirit and our clay,  
That blend together in their vital play.  
Dull science may define the shattered mind,  
But who shall tell us where to seek and find  
The secret of its madness? Who shall point  
The screw that's loose, the hinge that's out of  
joint,  
In that unfathomed mystery? Go thou,  
Whose deft manipulations span the brow,  
Go thou a step above thy wonted train,  
And tell us who or what hath made the brain.

## V.

I well remember how we sate together,  
Rhoda and I, when Autumn's golden weather  
Smiled rich on hill and dale ; and waving grain  
In yellow glory like a billowy main,  
With rustling undulation to and fro,  
Flashed in the joyous breeze.—Ah, wo, ah, wo,  
That splendour shewed but strangely in my sight,  
In the dark gathering of that awful night.  
We sate, and we had spoken for a time  
Of daily matters : and when noon's long chime  
Was pealing slowly, suddenly the door  
Was opened, and all clothed and dizen'd o'er  
With holiday apparel, pale as death,  
Came Claribel. And smiling, with quick breath  
She hailed us with gay greeting, heedless all  
Of our bewildered stare : and she did fall  
A prating of such incoherent things  
As crushed my heart with anguish. Rhoda's rings



Caught her wild eye, and with a voice and look  
Inexplicably mournful, she took  
Her hand in hers, and with a gaze that tarried  
In wonder, asked her "When did you get married?  
I had so strange a dream about my marriage :  
Methought I bid them haste and bring the carriage  
To take us to the Church : and lo, they brought  
A great black dismal hearse. And when, methought,  
I chid them, they made no reply but sad  
And stony looks, as if I had been mad :  
Whereat I shuddered, and all in my dream  
I trembled to my heart and tried to scream,  
But could not for my life. And then a change  
Came o'er it all as sudden as 'twas strange :  
As in a flash of thought all faces pale,  
And funeral garments, round me in a vale  
Of Sabbath stillness, thronged : and there again  
That great black dismal hearse, with slackened  
rein

And melancholy pace was moving slow,  
And lumbering as it jolted to and fro  
With dark distinctness, and the painted skull  
Grinned eyeless on me. Then I saw the dull,  
Deep, wormy grave : and shrank as I beheld  
The coffin from its gloomy wain unshelled,  
Protruding darkly with its taper square  
Edged with fantastic silver. Oh then, there,  
I struggled, as they bore it to its rest,  
To read the name engraven on the breast :  
But it was strangely cyphered, and I strove  
In vain to solve it. Then, then as they hove  
It darkly down there came a rush of tears  
That blinded me : and palpitating fears  
Made tumult in my breast, and I awoke  
And saw with wonder how the broad day broke  
In lofty splendour.—Julian, Julian, oh,  
Look not with chiding eyes upon me so,  
Thus late and laggard on our bridal day.

Smile, and forgive me, Julian. Nay, then, nay,  
 If thou wilt frown and look so strange, I'll kneel  
 And weep the bitter penitence I feel :  
 And with my tears thus streaming I will bow  
 My head upon thy knees, and bid thee now  
 Forgive me and forget. For oh, my heart  
 Is worn with grief to see thee as thou art."

## VI.

Forgive thee and forget thee, Claribel !  
 When I forget thee there shall be the knell  
 Of perished reason wailing in the blast  
 O'er Memory's grave the burial of the Past.  
 The blotted scroll of Time's uncounted years  
 Shall then be bleached to whiteness in my tears :  
 And every print and record of my pain  
 Dissolved and perished in their wasting rain.  
 Forgive thee and forget thee ! Oh, my heart,  
 When thy most sainted idol shall depart

Into oblivion, there shall be a close  
 Of all thy weakness and of all thy woes :  
 And shrivelled into nothingness, the scroll  
 Of Universal Nature then shall roll  
 Its faded brightness and supernal prime  
 In dust and lumber of exhausted time.  
 Forgive thee and forget thee ! When the frame  
 Of stable earth in the devouring flame  
 Shall crack and splinter ; and the heavens, ob-  
     scured  
 With clouds, shall meet like dungeons o'er im-  
     mured  
 And perishing existence ; then, oh, then,  
 When every vestige of the things of men  
 Lies smouldering in ruin, I will dare  
 To lose thy image in oblivion there.  
 Forgive thee and forget thee ! When the goal  
 Of time is reached, and the immortal soul  
 Of human continuity shall pine

And dwindle to extinction of its line ;  
Its science, and its labour, and its lore,  
Submerged in the eternity of yore :  
Oh then shall time forget thee, and foretell  
Its own extinction in thy closing knell.

## VII.

Need I with curious minuteness now  
Re-enter and delineate all how  
The rapid fullness of my growing grief  
Was then accomplished ? Need I from the chief  
And final ruin turn and string my woes  
Like beads that dwindle till the series close ?  
Need I elaborately note and name  
How, with resistless swoop of havoc, came  
That gathered hurricane, whose final stroke  
Fell on the hapless Rhoda like a shock  
Of blasting thunder, ere a cloud appeared  
To tell her of the tempest as it neared ?

How from her pale and panic struck amaze  
She burst with one wild shriek : and how her gaze  
Was riveted like madness where, with head  
Bowed down, and dark locks all dishevelled spread  
Upon my knees, and weeping her wild wo,  
Lay hapless Claribel ? Or how the throe  
Of sudden sweeping agitation then  
Convulsed her with untimely pangs ; and when  
From deadly travail, lifeless at its birth,  
The blasted promise of her joy came forth,  
How in the withering pang her spirit past  
From swoon to swoon, until she lay at last  
In deadly stupor ? Need I speak again  
How Claribel, unnaturally then  
Sustained by fever, in that withering hour  
Of grief fell senseless, stricken by the power  
Of hurrying and accumulated pain,  
That strangely flashed on her bewildered brain ?  
Or need I tell how through that fatal day

I paced the silent chambers where they lay  
In breathless stillness imaging the death  
That hovered over them : or how, with breath  
Suspended, like one wandering in a dream,  
I passed from room to room, as if the gleam  
Of fluttering hope alternately would play  
Around the one I saw not where she lay ?  
Or need I tell how, as the day wore on  
And darkness came, I felt I was alone,  
With that dread desolate liveness of the heart  
Recoiling on itself, as, with a start,  
A sudden recollection and a dream  
Is flashed upon us like a lightning gleam,  
To leave us, when its fleeting glare is o'er,  
More hopeless, dark, and desolate than before ?  
Or need I tell how the dull lengthening chimes  
Rose on me like the knell of happier times,  
As hour by hour the long day slowly past,  
And dark and dreary midnight on the blast

Prolonged its boding peals, that rose and fell  
Through the dim darkness like a passing bell ?

## VIII.

Yet ere that solemn sweeping peal had past  
With closing clang borne on the wailing blast ;  
Yet ere its iron tongue with sullen boom  
Had hoarsely spoken thrice throughout the gloom,  
All as she lay, from Claribel there came  
A murmur, and a motion, and a name ;  
And with her eyes she looked as she would speak,  
But her full heart o'ercame her : and her cheek  
And brow a moment kindled up the while  
With such a heavenly and seraphic smile  
As passeth human ken. And then she seemed  
To mingle with some phantom as it gleamed  
On her tranced eye : and fluttering away  
Her spirit passed, and she was senseless clay.  
And when the hapless Rhoda winged her flight



To heaven, not those who watched by her that  
night

Could tell me : but I know her spirit came  
To Claribel, and when she breathed her name,  
I know their spirits mingled ; and I know  
They dwell together where the name of wo  
Is never heard. Nor do I care how soon  
I meet them there, and share the blessed boon  
Of hope, and immortality, and rest,  
And holy adoration of the blest.

IX.

I know not then what stupor overcame  
My senses ; but I dwelt in such a frame  
Of seeming calmness, on the funeral day  
I found myself among the dark array  
Of mourners following the gloomy hearse  
That bore them to the grave. And in the course  
Of all the mournful rites I was sustained

Even to the last : but when the shovellers rained  
Loud clods upon the coffin, every knock  
Stunned my sick heart as with a deadly shock.  
And when the turf was rolled on the green mound,  
And with their spades they clapped it round and  
round,  
I felt a sudden weight of sick despair ;  
And darkness closed on daylight's dwindling glare.  
I know not, and it is not to be known,  
What madness is ; but surely if the throne  
Of my invested reason could have shook,  
It had been shaken then. But in my look  
There was reliance and a power of mind  
That curbed expression ; while all soft and kind,  
With honeyed words, as gentle as a child,  
I spake with speakers, and with smilers smiled.  
For of the sacred sorrow of my heart  
What could they feel or tell whose wildest start  
Of passion was the tremour of an hour,

That spent and faded ere they felt its power ?  
 They had not nursed insidious grief for years,  
 Nor sapped the roots of fondness with their tears.  
 They had not clung like mariners to rocks  
 Of shelter till the waves' repeated shocks  
 Tore them with bleeding fingers from their hold,  
 And swathed them in the white and briny fold  
 Of whirling waters. They had never known  
 The maddening impulse to ascend the throne  
 Of passion's heaven ; nor had they ever felt  
 Their choked hearts with divine suffusion melt,  
 When crushed, and bruised, and broken, they  
     would still  
 Accept, un murmuring, their Maker's will.

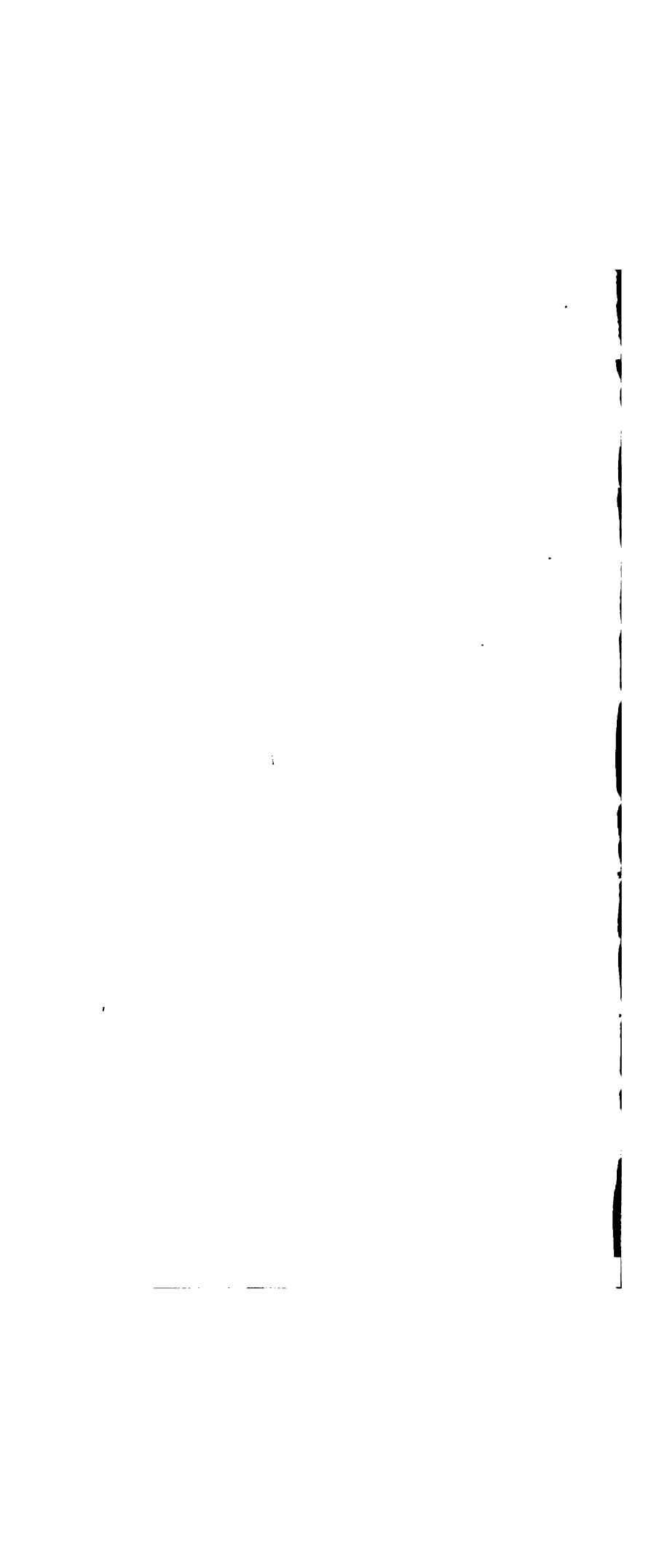
## X.

Nor is it mine to murmur, oh ye Powers,  
 That lead us onward through the darkest hours  
 Of earth's bereavements to a hope on high ;

Waking us to those presences that lie  
 Impatient to reveal to our slow seeing  
 The inner light of man's mysterious being.  
 For in time's fulness I arose at length  
 Girt like a giant with the honest strength  
 Of grim deliberate truth ; such truth as scorns  
 The idle efflorescence which adorns  
 The stern realities of life and death  
 With aught but their own dreadfulness. With the  
     breath  
 Of silence gazing solemnly on high.  
 I felt a brooding impulse to defy  
 And laugh all grief to scorn : for oh, I cried,  
 Those starry heavens that flame on every  
     side,  
 This excellence and glory of the earth,  
 Are they not thronging with immortal mirth,  
 And breathing inexterminable joy ?  
 Then on my sadness burst the mighty cry

Of universal nature to extol  
The Power and Presence of the Living Whole.  
The being and the attributes of God  
In their unspeakable fulness overflowed  
My spirit with a deep and awful peace ;  
And I was conscious of a glad release  
From all the fretting care and idle strife  
That marred the holy gladness of my life.  
I gloried in the grief that gave me power  
To bow before my Maker in that hour,  
And with a speechless awe and trusting love  
Look like a child for guidance from above.  
And in that hallowed extacy I felt  
The memory of the dear departed melt  
Into a oneness and a holy glow  
Pervading all things : and I seemed to know  
Their spiritual presence with fond power  
Disturb my heart in many a musing hour.

**THE BATTLE OF THE BRIDGES:**  
**A POETICAL EXTRAVAGANZA,**  
**IN THREE PARTS.**



## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

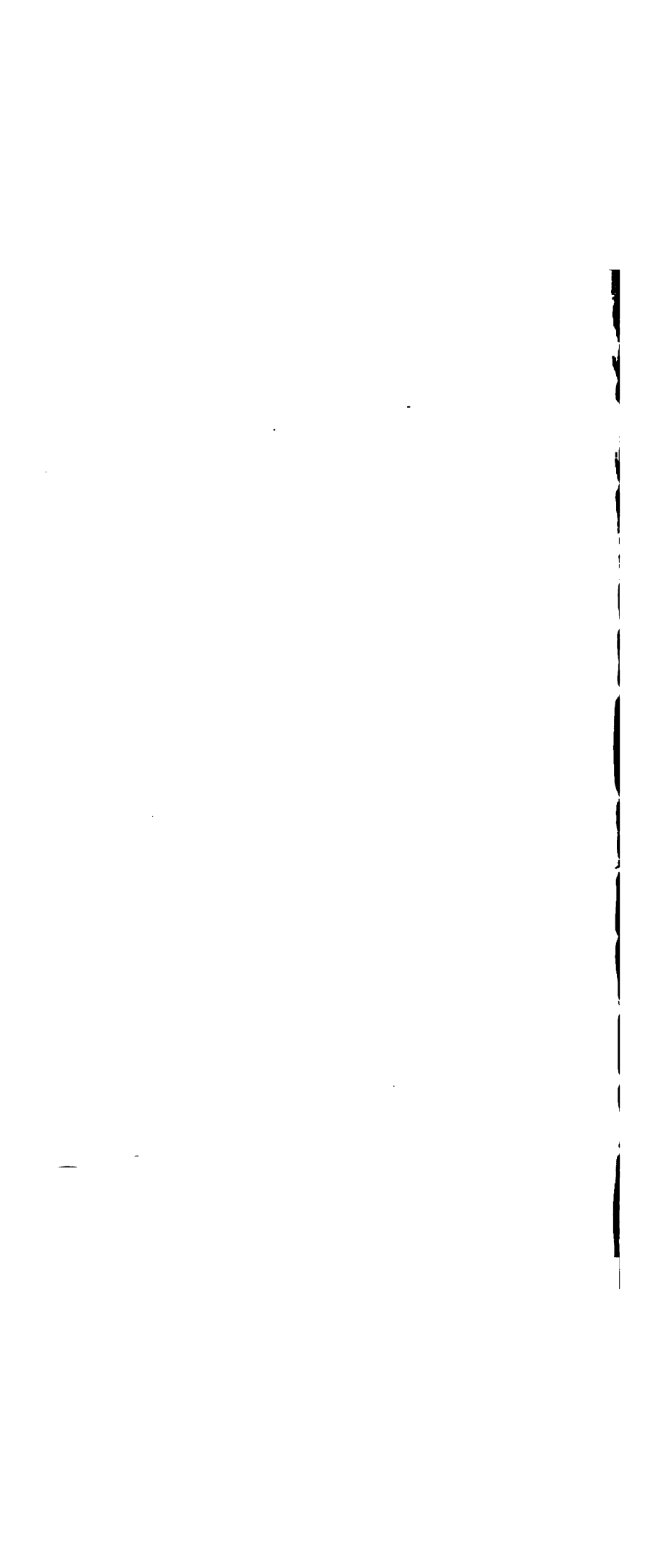
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THOSE who have read the "Undine" of Baron de la Motte Fouqué will remember how a river foaming down a hillside is represented in the dreamy twilight of imagination as an old man of gigantic stature with long white hair, nodding his head with most portentous and alarming significance. They will remember also, how invariably the fixing of the attention of the beholder of the apparition reveals to his more awakened apprehension, not the gigantic and shadowy spectre of his dream, but the natural object in its quickly recognised and most familiar aspect. And a reader of lively apprehension will readily perceive, that to a spectator who has surrendered himself to this dreamy fantasy of imaginative twilight, a clump of smoking chimneys will easily resolve



themselves into a promiscuous assemblage of gigantic weather-beaten spectres, with a most redundant growth of black hair curling about their ears, and fluttering in sooty ringlets far and wide. And the investiture of these sterile masses with living looks and moving limbs being once palpably and permanently effected, the reader will have no difficulty in perceiving that what he might otherwise have supposed to be clouds are in reality squadrons of Air-devils; and that behind these squadrons of Air-devils there are brigades of Water-sprites, hurlers of the big rain and the volleying hail; and that behind these Water-sprites again there are platoons of Fire-fiends, throwers of the sheet fire-balls, and shooters of the red lightning. And when the reality of these important but neglected facts is fully and firmly impressed upon the mind of the reader, he will have no difficulty in apprehending in further elucidation of the science of meteorology, that all the aerial clamour and roof-shaking hurly-burly, which dilettanti investigators are accustomed to slur over as a mere midnight hurricane, is in reality a most impetuous and terror-engendering onslaught of the Genii of the Air and their accom-

plices, on those subtile and mysterious Guardians of the structural edifices of the Earth, of whose manners, history, and political organisation, the present work is a partial, and, it is hoped, not altogether ineffective, elucidation.



## ARGUMENT.

THE aerial nature of the agents of the drama. The peacefulness of their purpose. The sorrow which possessed them. The rumour which affrighted them. The sympathy of material structures and mechanisms with the consternation of their aerial guardians. Terrific and growing reality of the danger. Renewed consternation of the gnomes and giants; and rousing of their aerial Chief. He chides his disturbers. They declare the peril. He laughs at their fears and defies his enemies. The speakers renew their lamentations; and declare the nature of the peril. The impatience of their Chief. He repudiates the declaration; and exults in his alliance with man. Fierce mockery of the speakers in their rejoinder. They declare that man himself is the originator of the impending peril. Sudden and terrific consternation of the aerial Chief. He reproaches man

with ingratitude, and inquires the occasion of the impending peril. The speakers profess their incompetence to unriddle the designs of man ; but they declare that his operations against them will speedily be sanctioned by law. Bitter reproaching of Parliament by the aerial Chief ; and his sudden resolution to appeal in deputation against the enactment. He declares that he will cite their essential usefulness in the industrial Arts as a ground of appeal. The speakers declare that the professors of industrial Arts are the originators of the operations against them. They refer to the restless unsettlement of Society, and its foolish acceptance of men possessed. They account for the operations against them by the infectious nature of insanity in popular agitations. Final desolation of the aerial Chief. He discourses of the perishable nature of all grandeur ; and opens into a vein of metaphysical speculation. He offers grim welcome to his doom ; and pathetically expatiates on the approaching disinheritment of his race. He apostrophises the originator of the operations against them ; but refrains from anathematising him. Sudden and unexpected adjournment of the meeting.

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## PART FIRST.

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### I.

I know not, nor I may not tell,  
The secrets of that sight too well :  
But to that midnight congress came,  
Full many a shape of fiery flame ;  
And many a grim gigantic wight  
Rocked in the breeze his rolling height ;  
And many a vast and vapoury form  
Passed like the genius of the Storm,  
Dreadly intent with sweeping ire,  
To burst in hurricanoes dire.

## II.

But not on stormful purpose bent  
Guests to that grim convention went;  
Not on a hest of havoc came  
Those wavering shapes of fiery flame;  
Nor in the blood-thirst fiercely bold  
Those grim gigantic phantoms rolled;  
Nor in battalioned ranks to form,  
Deadly and still, passed, like the storm,  
Those wondrous shapes, all vapoury vast,  
And mournful as the moaning blast.

## III.

For sorrow on their great sad hearts,  
And fear on their vexed inward parts,  
Laid sullen hold: and all in grief,  
Summoned by their foreboding Chief,  
They met at midnight, in the gloom,  
Consulting darkly of their doom.

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## IV.

For on the wings of rumour came  
A breath that boded grief and shame ;  
A low hoarse breath of rumour rose,  
Of triumphings of distant foes ;  
Of bills discussed and passed at length,  
To shear their Samsons of their strength ;  
Of laws expressly framed to dock  
Each chimney of its tail of smoke,  
And make it in innocuous gas  
Its products of combustion pass.

## V.

Oh ! Leeds, throughout thy thousand fires,  
And through their thousand spewing spires,  
Chill horror ran when first the fame  
Of meditated insult came.  
Yea, every chimney to the quick  
Was wounded in its inmost brick ;



Or in its heart of stone was torn  
To feel yet un-inflicted scorn.  
Yea, every boiler where it sat,  
In indignation hissed and spat ;  
And every bumping engine blew  
In sympathetic frenzy through.  
Yea, every furnace fiercely roared ;  
And fiercely every chimney poured  
Its black defiance far and wide,  
With sparks of rage on every side.

## VI.

But when the gathering rumour grew  
With dark distinctness sternly true :  
When mighty men of science spoke  
Thick volumes on consuming smoke,  
With tinted diagrams that shewed  
What atoms would in flame explode :  
When tough and studious engineers

Were set together by the ears ;  
 Each striving in the fierce contention  
 To prove his own the best invention,  
 And shew that others, without joke,  
 Would end, as they began, in smoke :  
 When sober men of business too  
 Began to think the thing might do ;  
 And backed by lawful sanction given  
 Defied the very clouds of heaven ;  
 And mustering to the fierce attack  
 Would give their native smoke the sack :

## VII.

Oh ! then, the sprites and gnomes that dwell  
 Within each flue and furnace cell,  
 And the tall spectres of the sky  
 That lift their grimy heads on high,  
 Roused with indignant wailing grief,  
 From his black slumber, their dread Chief.

Him in his drowsy trance with wail  
Of nightly grief their cries assail :  
Mournful and dirgelike as the blast,  
For many a night their moaning passed ;  
Unheeded as the famished cry  
Of houseless wanderers when they die.  
But gathering nightly, nightly strength,  
That sound with rousing bruit at length  
Rose hoarsely, till, with pricked-up ear,  
The drowsy giant roused to hear,  
And gathering all his senses then  
Listened to hear it sound again.

## VIII.

Sullen he stood in black bulk there,  
In stony vastness squat and square,  
And muttering in his drowsy mood,  
Hailed his disturbers where he stood.  
“ Why weep ye, children ? and why keep  
This wailing in the hour of sleep ?

Are we not daily fed, and why  
Not sleep when night is in the sky?"

## IX.

Then from the distance came the roar  
Of murmuring voices, "Sleep no more!  
Thy long dark locks that sweep the sky  
All shorn from off thy pate shall lie,  
Scattered to every breeze of heaven.  
Oh! mighty Chieftain, be forgiven  
The fear that dreads thy coming doom,  
And mourns it nightly in the gloom,  
Yea, and with wild importunate wail  
Would still thy princely ears assail.  
Oh! mighty Chief, not for ourselves  
Poor worthless Gnomes, and Sprites, and  
    Elves,  
We mourn impending fate. 'Tis thou,  
With royal front and portly brow,

Adorned with glorious locks that rise,  
 Tiara-like, and touch the skies,  
 'Tis thou who, in thy fallen state,  
 Shalt mourn the dread decree of fate."

## X.

Then loud in sudden vastness there,  
 With royal rage, "Who dare? who dare?"  
 Thunders that Chieftain roused at length  
 To all his stature and his strength.  
 "Do I not beckon with my hand  
 The long-haired Samsons where they stand?  
 Do I not bid them come and go;  
 Wheel, front, and charge, and rout the foe?  
 Am I not king by royal right  
 Of every demon, gnome, and sprite,  
 Goblin, and elf, and fiend that dwells  
 In sooty or in sulphury cells,  
 Within the marked and mystic bound?"

And where, where shall the foe be found  
 Beyond that precinct, who shall dare  
 Lay hand upon my sacred hair ?  
 Oh ! let them come with all the storms  
 Of winter blackening round their forms ;  
 Let them descend from upper air  
 In the dread lightning's forked glare ;  
 Or in the whirling blast arise  
 Rebellious to the raging skies ;  
 Let them in league and compact dire,  
 Demons of water, air, and fire,  
 In thundering hurricanoes burst ;  
 I dare defy them to their worst ! "

# XI.

Thus with a deep and rousing cry  
 He poured his fierce defiance high ;  
 But louder, wilder, than before,  
 Lamenting warnings rose once more.

Far echoing through the vault of heaven  
 That mighty sound of grief was given,  
 With wailing burst and sudden cry,  
 Rolled, surge-like, to the cloud-bound sky.

XII.

“ No more, no more, oh ! never more,  
 Thou dread one in the battle's roar,  
 Shall thy fierce prowess, reeking far,  
 Astound the shattered ranks of war.  
 No more thy sulphury plumes shall shed  
 Their horror o'er the vanquished head,  
 Where thy fell vengeance hath laid low  
 The pride of thy insulting foe.  
 No more, no more, oh ! never more,  
 Fierce shall thy mustering squadrons pour  
 Against contending demons dire,  
 Leagued fiends of water, air, and fire.  
 No, mighty Chieftain, not from these

Hast thou to dread stern Fate's decrees ;  
 Ah ! would it were but their scorned power  
 Did threat thee in this doom-dark hour !"

## XIII.

" But no, no, no ; a mightier far,  
 Dire, and insidious league of war,  
 Threatens thy royal pate with scorn ;  
 With rooted locks from off it torn,  
 And scattered to the scoffing breeze.  
 Mourn, mighty One ! dread Fate's decrees ;  
 Mourn for the children of thy pride,  
 Whose streaming hair on every side  
 Rolls its rich volume, curling high,  
 In eddying blackness to the sky.  
 Mourn, mourn ; for all their pride and might  
 Shall perish in one rueful night ;  
 And mockery, with discordant jar,  
 Bruiting thy fallen state afar,



Shall not the foes who fled thy frown,  
 Colleaguings, in oppression, down  
 Chain thy dread strength, then dread no  
 more ?

Mourn, mourn the perished pride of yore,  
 When thou in regal state didst stand,  
 The beacon of our cloud-bound land.  
 Mourn in the dire decree of Fate,  
 Thy shorn, and scorned, insulted pate."

## XIV.

Dumb in impatience sternly stood  
 That Chieftain high in haughty mood,  
 And heard the wild importunate wail  
 Repeat its dark prophetic tale  
 Of scorn, of insult, and of doom ;  
 Then hurled his answer through the gloom,  
 Sharp as a crack of thunder high  
 That tears along the topmost sky :—

## XV.

“ Tell me no more, tell me no more  
Of lying prophecy. Before  
The deep dread darkness of the sky  
I fling ye back the futile lie.  
Lives not on earth, nor lurks in hell,  
A power so terrible and fell,  
As this ye speak of, to affront  
My legions in the battle-brunt :  
And how then dare ye, with vain fears  
And lamentations, mock my ears ?  
Gather your clouded senses back  
To slumber while the midnight rack  
Is yet o’er-darkened ; so ye shall  
Be ready at the morning call,  
With fierce combustion and with roar  
Of suction through your throats to pour  
Industrial clouds to heaven. So man,  
In whose prevailing might began

Our eminent race, finding us still  
 Faithful to his creative skill,  
 With daily care our grates shall pack  
 With loads of tributary slack,  
 Studded with lumps of crackling coal ;  
 While we in sounding stature roll  
 Exuberant clouds to heaven, and fling  
 Soot favours on our pigmy king,  
 Rejoicing in alliance proud  
 With man's recondite arts."

## XVI

Oh ! loud,  
 And wailing wild, and bitter then  
 With sneering mockery, again  
 Rose lamentations to the sky,  
 Of thousand voices fiercely high ;  
 Shaking that Chieftain where he stood  
 In the grim grandeur of his mood,

With sudden and appalling fear  
Of doom and desolation near.

## XVII.

“Ha ha! Ha ha!” They laughed in scorn,  
“Thou mighty Samson yet unshorn,  
’Tis man himself, this fond ally  
Who reared thee towering to the sky,  
’Tis he shall smite thy glory!—Now  
Vaunt in defiance thy proud brow,  
Scoffing our grief away! Deride  
The desolation of thy pride  
Whose coming we have mourned! Oh, vain  
Assumption of thy cloud-bound brain,  
King of the squadrons of the sky,  
That shake their streaming locks on high  
In terrible glory, when their trail  
Flaps on the horizontal gale.  
Alas, alas, thou with them all

In pride and strength shalt surely fall ;  
The glory of thy power is past,  
Like thy shorn strength that on the blast  
Shall yet lie scattered. Oh ! arise,  
Hiding thy stature in the skies,  
And teach thy gloom-girt children now  
The glory of defeat. Go bow  
Thy regal head to scoff and scorn,  
And bear the fate that must be borne."

## XVIII.

Thus pitilessly they. And he,  
All fallen from his pride, with free  
And passionate lamentings told  
The sudden gush of grief that rolled  
Recoiling on his heart. All vast,  
And like a tree that in the blast  
Quivers and waves, he, his wide arms  
Spread in the sky : and with alarms

Depicted on his suppliant brow,  
 Pours forth deep desolation now,  
 And ever-grieving wail :—

## XIX.

“ Oh ! day

Of pride and glory passed away  
 In scorned extinction. And oh ! hour  
 Of destiny's malignant power,  
 Why hast thou come upon me ? Oh !  
 Friend of our race, art thou the foe  
 That threaten'st with insulting scorn  
 The power of thy own genius born ?  
 Are we not faithful as we stand  
 To every whisper of command ?  
 Do we one day or hour refuse  
 To suck through retrograding flues  
 The roaring flame ? Or have we ever  
 Neglected hourly to deliver

In black abundance fuming high  
 Our smoky tribute to the sky?  
 Oh! wretched and ungrateful man,  
 Whate'er thy restless genius can  
 Thy will compels, making kings kiss  
 Thy rod of power; but surely this  
 Newborn and sacrilegious whim  
 Befits not thee.—Tell me, ye dim  
 Lugubrious phantoms of the night,  
 Wailing in passionate affright,  
 Why is it, and how comes this hap,  
 That smites us on the fallen chap?"

## XX.

"Alas, O king," with sad lament,  
 Their answering voices back they sent,  
 "How can we teach with answer meet  
 The why and how of man's conceit?  
 Or how unfold and scrutinise

The subtle schemes his wits devise ?  
Enough, with hammers and with trowels  
We feel him poking in our bowels,  
Building up here, and opening there,  
To lead into the fiery glare  
The smoke, that with inquiring eye  
He watches curling to the sky.  
Enough, that down our lurid throats  
With hourly eye he peeps and notes  
The colour of combustion dire  
That mingles there in smoke and fire ;  
And with a puff of added air  
Would fan it to a fiercer glare.  
Enough, that pregnant with inventions  
He notes and measures our dimensions,  
Brooding and planning in his dreams  
The apparatus of his schemes,  
And with a restless fretful power  
Experimenting hour by hour.



Enough, O king, that rumours dire  
That smoke shall be consumed by fire,  
Are passed abroad ; yea, the day named  
When through the land shall be proclaimed,  
Dread law, that blackening fumes no more  
From chimney tops shall puff and pour."

## XXI.

"Dread law ! alas, and is it thus,"  
Rejoined that Chief, "that they on us  
Heap scorn by law ; and by a vote  
Of parliamentary power denote  
Their might and our abasement ? Oh !  
My long-haired legions, we must go  
In deputation forth, and kneel  
And supplicate them to repeal  
The dire enactment. Yea, we must  
Arrest the madness of unjust  
And partial rule ; and with the frown

Of our insulted brows beat down  
The minions of the hour that dare  
To smite their glory bald and bare.  
Yes, my brave legions, in the strength  
Of right we must arise at length,  
And with indignant truth dismay  
The parasites that rule the day.  
They with their diplomatic wiles,  
Their dalliance, and their courtly smiles,  
May win the weaklings: but when truth  
Shakes off the slumber of its youth,  
And rousing in resistless might  
Proclaims, like thunder in the night,  
That justice shall be law. O then,  
Where are the hapless shreds of men,  
Enrobed in purple power, shall dare  
Affront its majesty?—Go bear  
Light hearts against this threatened grief:  
For sure as I am King and Chief,

This wrong shall not prevail. I will  
So represent the worth and skill  
Of man's industrial Arts, that they  
Shall never in the face of day,  
Perpetrate this aggrieving wrong  
On us, who to our pride belong,  
And are indeed, in all our parts,  
Essential to Industrial Arts."

## XXII.

"Alas, O king," still boding rose  
Lamenting warnings, threatening woes,  
"In vain were all thy fancied power  
To win from Fate one worthless hour;  
So subtly and so surely tend  
All powers against thee, to offend  
Thy majesty with scorn. Even they,  
Whose will subserving day by day  
Obediently we stand, are bent,

With stern and pitiless intent,  
To mock us and insult us. Rage  
Of innovation rules the age;  
The good old wisdom of the past  
Like musty clothes aside is cast;  
And nothing now will pass on 'Change  
Unless it is both new and strange.  
The madman with the wildest whim  
Finds readiest acceptance; him  
Deluded crowds with eager eyes  
Follow, applauding to the skies;  
Till whiff,—the bubble bursts, and down,  
In mad vexation, king and crown  
Are hurled, and trampled in the dust.  
The venerable and the just  
Are known no more, but all is wild  
Splenetic frenzy; and the child  
Of threescore years must have his toy,  
Like any other baby boy.

## XXIII.

“ And in the general maddening maze,  
What wonder when some fool surveys  
Our sulphury glory where we stand  
Unfurling darkly cloud the land,  
Some wild scheme fires his fancy then ?  
What wonder that his fellow men,  
Mad as himself, catch up with glee  
The dire conceit, and that it flee  
Like wild fire’s flash from brain to brain ?  
What wonder that the vexed main  
Of agitation rolls and roars,  
And in its chafing frenzy pours  
Petitions forth, like filth and mud  
Churned by the indiscriminate flood ?  
What wonder that a legislature  
Of most accommodating nature,  
Intent on its own ease consents  
To fool them to their topmost bents ?

---

Alas, alas, oh ! king, too dire  
 And pitiless all powers conspire  
 To smite thee with this ruined wreck :  
 And though thou summon with thy beck  
 Ten thousand compeers, yet thy call  
 Bids them but witness thy own fall."

## XXIV.

Bowed in grim grandeur and in grief  
 All desolately stands that Chief ;  
 Crushed with reiterated blows,  
 And threats of unevaded woes.  
 Too surely, darkly, rose at length  
 The vision of his perished strength,  
 On his great eyes, that opened wild,  
 With the mute wonder of a child.  
 " Is it, ye powers ! " he groans at length,  
 " That ruin claims all pride and strength  
 By fixed inevitable law ;

That majesty that filled with awe  
One little moment, shall the next  
Be but a commentator's text  
To preach of perished glory? Yea,  
Is it that all things have their day,  
And in the sullen sweep of Time  
Hover a moment in sublime  
Exaltment, and the next are hurled,  
Forgotten, trampled by the world  
In dark oblivion down? Oh! is it  
That Life is but a passing visit  
Of some invisible agent, which  
Looks out in glory with a rich  
And passionate dawn, to fade away  
In the dark clouds of closing day?  
Is it that, muffled and unseen,  
The Power that hath for ever been,  
Reveals by glimpses, come and gone,  
The splendours of its hidden throne;

That every form and shape of power  
 Is but a symbol for an hour  
 Of something which it is not? Yea,  
 Is it that we in our brief day  
 Are but a thought of the Great Mind,  
 In momentary shape confined;  
 That acts and passes before men,  
 And goes and never comes again?

## XXV.

"Then welcome, thou dread doom! Aye,  
 though  
 Our ranking spires are all laid low;  
 And we poor spirits of their forms  
 Sent howling amid Winter's storms.  
 Our old accustomed stones and bricks  
 Shall know us then no more; their nicks  
 And seams, familiar to our eyes,  
 Shall perk no longer in the skies;



But scattered in the trampled dust  
 Shall mourn our perished power. Their  
 crust

Of weather-beaten grandeur then  
 Patched up may house the sons of men,  
 But shelter us no more ; their forms,  
 New pointed, may defy the storms  
 That chase us o'er the sea. Their pride  
 May yet for generations hide  
 In architecture new and strange :  
 But not to Time's remotest range  
 Shall we together dwell. Ah ! no,  
 Forth on the wide wild world we go,  
 To seek a home we know not where  
 In disinherited despair.

## XXVI.

" Ah me ! alas ! I almost feel  
 The pang of parting o'er me steal,

---

And wring the trickling tear-drop down :  
 When the foul scaffold-mounting clown  
 With pickaxe and with crow-bar, bent  
 To smite, with pitiless intent,  
 Our weather-beaten brows, ascends  
 The fatal ladder wherewith ends  
 Our glory and our power.—Oh wretch !  
 Who from infernal realms did'st fetch  
 The dire conceit to sear away  
 The glory of our proud array,  
 I will not curse thee : no, my friend,  
 I will but bid thy master send  
 Swift summons for thee back to dwell  
 In thy own home, thy native hell."

## XXVII.

But while he speaks the pale cold light  
 Of morn is glimmering through the night ;

And roosted in some neighbouring farm  
The early cock gave loud alarm.  
Whereat each grim and grisly sprite  
Wavered and vanished in the night ;  
And to a hush the speaker's tone  
Passed, like the night-wind's dying moan.

## ARGUMENT.

GREAT Congress of Mechanicsians ; and intense interest of the Populace in their proceedings. Fierce rivalry of the Mechanicsians ; and difficulty of deciding on the merits of their Inventions. Sarcastic nature of the discussion ; and amusement of the Populace. Approach of the Aide-de-camp of the aerial Chief. He listens in silent horror and consternation. Mustering of the aerial Legions at midnight. Austere sadness of the aerial Chief ; and sepulchral gloom of his Legions. Opening of the business of the meeting by the aerial Chief. Awful picture of the impending desolation ; and daring Impeachment of Man by the aerial Chief. Universal horror and consternation of the aerial Legions. Impressive recapitulation by the aerial Chief ; and terrific announcement of the result of the recent Congress of Mechanicsians. Bellowing of the Storm-fiend in the distance ; and sudden

approach of his Forces. Sudden mustering of the Giants to repel the assault ; and terrific eagerness of the Demons for the conflict. Grim coolness of the aerial Chief in the disposition of his Forces. Terrific grandeur of the Forces in array ; and fierce eagerness of the Demons. Dreadful conflict on the Western Bridge ; and final rout of the Giants. Indecorous exultation of the Storm-fiend ; and grim greatness of the aerial Chief. Terrific attack by the aerial Chief, and fierce conflict with the Storm-fiend. Final overthrow of the Storm-fiend by the aerial Chief ; and alarming accident in consequence. Fierce onset by the Giants ; and tumultuous rout of the Demons. Desertion of the Storm-fiend by his followers ; and considerate care of the Giants. Re-assembling of the Giants after the Battle. Character of the Aide-de-camp of the aerial Chief ; and his influence in rousing the aerial Legions.

## PART SECOND.



### I.

'Twas on a night of fateful gloom,  
Within a large and lofty room  
A hundred mechanics sate,  
With solemn brows, in high debate ;  
And in the ample space below  
Dumb listeners, packed in many a row,  
Gaped expectation and delight  
Of the dread outcome of that night.

## II.

Full many a dread and dubious hour  
The balance swayed, power *versus* power ;  
And long on each abstruse invention  
The meeting hung with mute attention ;  
And oft their verdict wavered, dooming  
Those subtle schemes for smoke-consuming.  
Full many a hot and hasty dreamer  
Was roasted by some brother schemer,  
When he his vaunted apparatus  
Demolished to the meeting gratis.  
Full many a sober man of science  
Scowled on his brother black defiance,  
And stamping on the platform stood  
Till the Chair checked his furious mood.  
Full many a fierce collision then,  
Like flint with flint, of men with men,  
Evolved the fire-spark of keen wit  
That with sarcastic pungence hit,

And roused from the responsive floor  
Loud laughter that with bursting roar,  
Out of that walled and windowed room,  
Echoed like thunder through the gloom.

## III.

And lo ! as roar succeeds on roar,  
Shaking the windows, and all o'er  
The silent streets and listening earth  
Sending the eddies of its mirth,  
What giant spectre through the gloom  
Comes listening, as the tramp of doom  
Pealed in its ears ?—Oh ! who art thou  
Gray glimmering with thy vast sad brow,  
And with thy stature reaching high  
Above the house-tops to the sky.  
And with thy hair depending down  
Black as the midnight's blackest frown,  
Sweeping the street behind thy heel



As onward thou dost slowly steal ?  
 Oh ! who art thou ?—Hist ! for it kneels ;  
 And as the bursting laughter peals,  
 Shaking the windows with its din,  
 Peers, with sad eye, inquiring in.  
 Hist ! for fixed there with mute intent,  
 With ear to the oped window bent,  
 It listens through that long debate,  
 Pregnant with doom, and gloom, and fate.

IV.

Hark ! 'tis the pealing midnight swells ;  
 And spire to spire, far-answering, tells,  
 Over the silent house-tops greeting,  
 Twelve sullen booms, the hour of meeting.  
 And lo ! ere yet the closing clang  
 Dies in wide air, where the stars hang  
 Low in the west dim glimmering forms  
 Are mustering, like the wreathed storms,

Whose whirling mists, in giant bands,  
Walk the grim gloom of mountain lands.  
High o'er the house-tops, lo ! they rear  
Their glimmering vastness far and near ;  
And gathering into groups condense  
In gradual phalanxes immense,  
Their mustering squadrons. Like as boys  
When discipline dissolves in noise,  
Vault o'er their recent seats, so they  
O'erleap the housetops where they lay ;  
And, lithe and limber as the air,  
In many a gambol here and there  
Toss their great limbs. Unfit, I ween,  
Such pranks for such a solemn scene,  
And grim occasion : but even as  
In human destiny, the pause  
Of wisdom is filled up by folly ;  
And in the midst of melancholy  
Mad mirth will have his jest ; so here,

Those midnight musterers austere  
Held in their ranks gay rebels who  
Would laugh and sport that grim night through.

## V.

But lo ! where southward the great street  
Bends its broad course, they mustering meet :  
And with feet down, and heads in air,  
They sit upon the housetops there.  
And round and round, on every hand,  
In lines they sit, or grouped they stand  
In distant dimness, while the sheen  
Of the low stars is dimly seen  
Through their aerial forms. Oh ! rare  
And paramount in stature there  
Stood their great Chief ; and at his feet  
The clock looked midnight down the street  
With gaseous glare, like the low moon  
Up-struggling, or a fire-balloon,

Resplendent, through the midnight sky  
Heaving its disc sublimely high.

## VI.

Low muttering murmurs far and near  
Disturb the stillness : when, austere  
And sullen, in his grim gray height,  
Uprose their Chief in the void night.  
High in the moonless vault he reared  
His stern sad lineaments : and cheered,  
But with a sad sepulchral sound,  
Those midnight musterers round and round.  
And sleepers with the aerial roar  
Are interrupted as they snore ;  
But deemed not in their muddled heads  
What guests their hospitable leads  
Sustained that night, nor what strange sound  
Of grim applause rose echoing round.

## VII.

Tower-like he stood in the mid air ;  
And down his back his long dark hair  
Flowed like an inky cascade. Yea,  
His limbs and lineaments are gray,  
And seamed like weather-beaten rocks ;  
For he had buffeted the shocks  
Of many winters. With his hand  
Out-stretched in melancholy, bland,  
Majestic gesture, and with eyes  
Cast sadly to the deep dim skies,  
Thickset with stars, and with a brow  
Drooping in desolation now,  
And with a voice sad as the roar  
Of Ocean beating the lone shore,  
That mighty Chief, through the dim night,  
Hailed his grim ranks from height to  
height.

## VIII.

“Bravest in battle ; and in peace  
Most diligent, till the release  
Of Labour sets ye free ; ah ! how  
In helpless desolation now  
Can I recount what fearful gloom  
Is gathering round ye dark with doom ?  
How the black locks that give the crown  
Of strength to your embattled frown,  
Threatened with extirpation, soon  
Shall vanish like the waning moon  
Shorn to a shaving’s breadth ? Ah ! how,  
Thus ranked around me, shall I bow  
Your heads in desolation down,  
And hopeless grief, for the lost crown  
Of valorous achievement, long  
The birthright of the brave and strong ?  
How my grim compeers, shall I tell  
Of schemes concocted by some fell

And pitiless, remorseless power,  
To smite us in our proudest hour  
With wreck, and with dethronement, hurled  
In scoff and mockery on the world  
In desolation forth? Oh! how,  
Vexed into chafing madness now,  
Shall I with daring lips arraign  
Vice-regal man with all his train  
Of arts and scientific lore,  
And powers and wonders that explore  
All heaven and earth, with this great crime?  
How shall I hold him up to Time  
As the arch-Ingrate who, with fell  
And fathomless conceit of hell,  
Meditates and prepares even now  
To rend the glory from our brow,  
And smite with baldness every pate  
That meets me now in midnight state?"

## IX.

Sudden and startling through the night  
Passed the deep groan from height to height,  
Roused from that meeting in great grief  
Responsive to their speaking Chief.  
And anger, on their great sad brows  
Depicted, difficultly allows  
Their horror-parted lips again  
To close in listening silence then.  
But over-awed by the great grief  
And desolation of their Chief,  
Expressed in every gesture, they  
To his superior power gave way.  
“Aye ! ye may groan in great grim grief,  
My legions ; but beyond belief  
All subtle powers in compact dire  
Are leaguings to consume with fire  
The sooty nutriment from which  
The glory of our brows in rich



And volumed blackness grows. This night,  
 No further gone, their deadly spite  
 Matured, hath set the seal of power  
 On dire inventions ; and the hour  
 Of sun-dawn comes not, but with hammer,  
 And trowel, and unearthly clamour,  
 Our unfed bowels shall be stormed ;  
 And apparatus shall be formed,  
 And fixed with nice adjustment there,  
 To mingle fire and smoke and air  
 In fierce combustion ; and our brows  
 In smokeless baldness shall arouse  
 The laughter of all passers by,  
 Whiffing thin gases to the sky.

## X.

" Oh ! deadly dark and dire conceit ;  
 Give me a foe that we can meet  
 In honest battle in the field,

And I will conquer him or yield.  
 But oh ! ye blessed stars of heaven,  
 Let not our honoured brows be riven  
 Of glory by an artifice  
 So perverse and so poor as this ! ”

## XI.

And in the cry of grief he bowed  
 His head in desolation proud  
 And silent vastness. For a space  
 Silent before him the grim race  
 Of Giants sat ; when, at their back,  
 With sudden gleams the western rack  
 Burst in faint blazes that on high  
 Flashed in white light along the sky,  
 Reflected ; and then all was dark  
 And starry dimness, where their stark  
 And great grim forms were set. Anon,  
 Far in the muttering gloom, a tone

Of sullen thunder growled. Again,  
 More vivid blazes burst : and then  
 Louder and deeper rolled and roared  
 The muttering thunder as it poured  
 Its nearer volley. Yet once more  
 The blazing fire-flash dances o'er  
 The midnight rack : and from the womb  
 Of gathering clouds, burst out like doom  
 Renewing thunders, crack and crash,  
 Piled pealing, with promiscuous clash  
 Throughout the sounding gloom. And high  
 In whirling madness to the sky,  
 The wild blast roaring rose ; and loud  
 As closing war-hosts, in a cloud  
 Of dust comes thundering through the gloom.

## XII.

That rooted Chieftain dumb with doom  
 Stood for a space : and all around

Unmoving in the gloom profound  
 Sat his grim compeers for a space.  
 But when the fire-flash on his face  
 Shed nearer gleams, his warlike eye  
 Responsive kindled : and the cry  
 Of his hoarse throat commanding pealed,  
 " Up ! my brave legions ! to the field !  
 And teach those Demons of the skies  
 The madness of this poor surprise ! "

And at his word each from his seat  
 Sprang ranked and ready to his feet ;  
 And bounding to the fray they passed  
 Down the broad street in column vast.

## XIII.

Where the slow river, in the sheen  
 Of the red lightning, gleams between,  
 They front the foe : and with a cry  
 That shook the welkin, they defy

The hostile squadrons rank on rank  
Loud louting on the southern bank.  
And at the sight of their grim foes  
Loud in defying response rose  
The Storm-fiend as he shook on high  
His wreathed form in the great sky :  
And at the summons of his power  
In loud defiance round him lout  
Demons of water, air, and fire,  
All eager for the conflict dire.

## XIV.

Then the grim giant Chieftain stood  
A moment in commanding mood :  
And with an instantaneous skill  
Divides, obedient to his will,  
His forces in three parts. These on  
The right in close battalion

Move westward : and their mission is  
 To storm the westward Bridge. And this  
 Battalion on the east is sent  
 Eastward : with mission to prevent  
 The capture of the eastward Bridge.  
 And here where with affronting ridge  
 The Storm-fiend fiercest lours, here stands  
 The giant Chieftain with his bands  
 To front the deadliest peril. Here  
 Against the northern sky they rear  
 Above the house-tops their grim front,  
 And sternly wait the battle brunt.

## XV.

Ah ! 'twas a sight surpassing all  
 That poets paint to see their tall  
 And unimaginable forms  
 Lourcing defiance on the storms :  
 Each eye fire-flashing, each lip curled

Contemptuous, and each brow enfurled  
In streaming hair, louring like rocks,  
Forest-clad, on the tempest's shocks.  
Ah! 'twas a sight magnificent,  
Beyond all fabulists invent,  
To see all o'er the southern bank  
The louring Storm-fiends rank on rank,  
Piling demoniac to the sky  
Their implacable vengeance high,  
And with the ever-bursting play  
Of lightning daring the affray,  
And with the ever-sounding roar  
Defying fiercely more and more  
The more their foes held back. Ah! 'twas  
A sight to give the vexed world pause,  
To see them in the wide wild night  
Close fiercely in the furious fight,  
And in the mixing maddening war  
Making all roofs and rafters jar,

And walls to tremble where they meet  
In the wild conflict's midnight heat.

## XVI.

First on the west the battle closed  
Where front to front grim ranks opposed  
Meet in wild conflict on the Bridge.  
First from their high and threatening ridge  
The clustering Demons pour around  
A watery deluge to astound  
The charging Giants. Grimly great  
The Giants charge like doom and fate,  
And fiercely on the southern strand  
Dispute with Demons hand to hand :  
Too bravely, for with fatal guile  
The Fiends in seeming rout recoil,  
Then issuing forth with sudden glare  
Smite fiercely on the hissing hair  
Of the astounded Giants. Lo !



This momentary shock the foe  
 Improves, and with demoniac yell  
 Storms northward with a crash so fell,  
 The Giants with their singèd locks  
 Shake in the unexpected shocks ;  
 And as their reeling ranks give back  
 Loud thunder booms along the rack,  
 And ever fiercer lightnings smite  
 The Giants in their broken flight.

## XVII.

Then leapt the Storm-fiend vaunting high  
 And snapped his fingers in the sky ;  
 And with his Demons laughed aloud  
 Defiance to the Giants proud.  
 But in that battle hour of Fate,  
 Their mighty Chieftain, grimly great,  
 Rose fiercer in defying power  
 To meet and master the dread hour.

He swerved not when he saw his bands  
O'er-leap the house-tops, feet and hands,  
In helter-skelter, every form  
Scattered before the raging Storm ;  
But in the sudden flash of thought  
He saw the victory unwrought,  
That with his fierce and matchless might  
He won and wore on that dread night.

## XVIII.

He whispered to his bands around,  
And catching the electric sound,  
Formed in close column with a ridge  
Of resolute brows, they cross the Bridge,  
Ready amidst their mustered foes  
In battle's deadly clash to close.  
With firm slow steps they ranking rear  
In louting vengeance grimly near,

And with alert determined eye  
Measure their foes, who pile on high  
Defying ranks, and with the glare  
Of lightning kindle all the air.

## XIX.

Nearer, and nearer, tramping come  
The Giants, in the uproar dumb,  
With stern intent, and with a proud  
Disdain of thunders bellowing loud,  
That with an intermittent roar  
The skyey Demons round them pour,  
Nearer, and nearer, till, at length,  
Their Chieftain gathering all his strength,  
With kindled eyes, and knitted rage,  
Bursts like a lion from his cage,  
And in his fierce infuriate mood  
Clutches the Storm-fiend where he stood.

## XX.

In deadly grips they wrestling close,  
And in their fierce aerial throes  
In many a grim contortion rack  
Their pitted strengths, while all give back  
Around them, and like doom and fate  
The issue of the contest wait.  
With many a clash, and many a bang,  
Among the roofs they wrestling wrang ;  
And sleepers in their beds with fear  
The rumblings of the tempest hear,  
But deemed not in that wild loud night  
What pitted powers are matched in fight.  
With many a thump, and many a knock,  
From street to street they roll and rock,  
Now bending till their face is black,  
Now straining till their sinews crack,  
And now, anon, with turn and twist,  
Re-catching footing they have missed.

With many a fiere and furious throe  
 They pant and wrestle to and fro,  
 And blown with rage, and scant of breath,  
 They wrestle on for life and death,  
 So nearly matched that none can tell,  
 Who shall be conquered, who shall quell.

## XXI.

But now in dire and deadly grips  
 The Storm-fiend gasps with whiter lips ;  
 Which feeling, with renewing rage,  
 The tough old Chief did so engage  
 His foeman with a sudden twist,  
 That he his slippery footing missed,  
 And in the effort to recover  
 The tough old Chieftain threw him over ;  
 When, hideous to relate ! he crashed  
 Against a gable, and down-dashed

A stack of chimneys, which fell through  
 The roof and through two stories too,  
 Making the astounded inmates pitch in  
 Wild wonder in the cellar-kitchen.

## XXII.

Then ranked and ready, grim and large,  
 The Giants in wild onset charge,  
 With such a fierce and furious shock  
 The demon hosts before them broke ;  
 When turning swiftly on their flank  
 The Giants charge them rank on rank.  
 In broken rout the Demons then  
 Move to the north and form again ;  
 But on the west the routed Giants  
 Muster anew in fierce defiance,  
 And sideward on the routed foe  
 Charge fiercely as they northward flow :

And from the east the fresh battalion  
Comes thundering like a battle stallion,  
Fiery and swift, with scorching breath,  
Demoniac to the feast of death !

## XXIII.

And thus, by threefold battle smitten,  
The stormy Demons, terror-bitten,  
Rush in wild panic to the north,  
All scattered in confusion forth,  
Leaving the Storm-fiend where he lay  
Insensate from the dire affray,  
Not killed, nor yet severely wounded,  
But stunned and very much astounded.  
Him then some Giants lingering there,  
Camp-followers, with considerate care  
Lifted and pitched into the river ;  
And ere he did his sense recover

He had far floated out to sea,  
And wondered much where he could be.  
But raging wild along the coast  
He met some of his scattered host,  
And with them went upon his way  
To fight again some other day.

## XXIV.

The Giants, now the sky was cleared,  
Once more in grim convention reared  
Their heads triumphant. And their Chief,  
Somewhat consoled in his great grief  
By his victorious prowess, sate  
Considering, on the chair of state,  
Of the strange haps which on that night  
Had ended in the recent fight.  
The clock between his legs now shone  
Three hours past midnight well nigh gone ;



And at that early hour of morning  
 The Chief, with thoughts of soon adjourn-  
     ing,  
 Spoke to his Aide-de-camp, the same  
 Who earlier in the evening came,  
 A spy upon that high Convention  
 Of Powers and Masters of Invention.

## XXV.

Likewise was he chief speaker on  
 The night on which was first made  
     known  
 To their great Chief the purpose then  
 Talked of and entertained by men,  
 Which they had met that night to mourn,  
 And question if it should be borne.  
 A sort of general spy was this  
 Who rooted out all things amiss,

And with good purpose, yet perverse,  
Would mend them, or would make them  
worse ;

But still in either case intended  
That in the end they should be mended ;  
He merely stirred the mess a little  
To make it more completely settle.  
He had a tact and privilege  
To set the best of friends on edge ;  
And bent on benefiting both  
Would rouse them into raging wrath,  
And then, with endless work and bother,  
Would reconcile the one to the other.  
He doated to a fascination  
On elements in agitation ;  
Not that he really loved a riot,  
But just he could not live in quiet,  
But prized, above all pleasures known,  
Something of some sort going on.

## XXVI.

A restless and ungenial working  
Of bilious humours in him lurking,  
Smoothed over with a plausible story  
Of interest in the public glory,  
Impelled him on the late occasion,  
To ferment into agitation  
The Giant hosts, whose interests hung  
Imperilled by his lying tongue.  
And months of secret operation  
Had ended in that demonstration,  
When, with a certain smack of slyness,  
He played upon his Royal Highness,  
Rousing the dread determined strength  
Of all his legions ; till, at length,  
That midnight meeting there befell,  
And all the wondrous haps we tell.

## ARGUMENT.

MOVEMENTS of the aerial powers on the night of the battle. The career of Britannia in her war chariot. The purpose of her going abroad on the night in question. Her progress to the northward. The unexampled splendour of her equipage. The imperial royalty of her personal appearance. Bellying of the Storm-fiend to the northward, and closing of the aerial conflict. Appearance of the town of Leeds by night. Amazement of Britannia on approaching the meeting. She inquires the purpose of the meeting. The reply of the aerial Chief. He indicates the impending peril; and supplicates her intercession to avert it. The amusement of Britannia at the procedure of the Giants. She inquires the nature of the impending peril. The aerial Chief declares the nature of the impending peril; and exults in the promised intercession of Britannia. Stern contempt manifested

by Britannia. She speaks in answer to the aerial Chief. She rates him on account of the length of his face and the folly of his imagination. She declares that the free and flowing course of nations cannot be arrested. She rates the Giants for the folly of their interference. She declares that no peril is impending over them : but that the operations of man will be to their advantage. She warns them to beware of false philosophy. She distinguishes between Science and Religion. She declares the symbolic character of the Giants. She indicates the splendour of the destiny which awaits them. She passes on her way, and vanishes in the night. The joy of the aerial legions in the destiny which awaits them. Final dispersion of the meeting, and conclusion of the drama.

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## PART THIRD.



### I.

Where heaves broad Thames with ocean's tides,  
Britannia rules, Britannia rides,  
For there in earth-o'erspreading power  
The dusky domes of London lour :  
Stupendous, with its miles of street,  
All coiled and clustered, wherein meet  
All nations of the earth each other,  
Yet man to man is least a brother.

## II.

There too, on this eventful night,  
Aerial powers in fiery flight  
Are sweeping past. Britannia's car,—  
Wherein accoutred as for war  
With helmed brow in martial pride,  
And with her buckler by her side,  
And with her spear-point glittering high,  
And with her proud and dauntless eye,  
She sits majestic,—through the night  
Sweeps northward like a comet's flight.  
Unnamed, unknown, still be the spot  
Whence issuing from her sea-girt grot,  
She scoured, in her careering flight,  
The breadth of Britain's isle that night :  
But named and known her errand be,  
To still all storms, by land and sea,  
That, on the morrow, Britain's Queen  
May northward sail with skies serene.

## III.

With beamy reins and fiery steeds  
From shore to shore her chariot speeds,  
Traversing in a zigzag track,  
And veering as a ship might tack,  
Still to the northward. Onward still  
With flashing speed, from hill to hill,  
And wheels of light, her chariot burns,  
And crosses still and still returns.  
Now over hills now over dales,  
Now over mists that sleep in vales,  
Now over mountain ridges veering,  
Or round their hoary peaks careering ;  
Now sweeping o'er the rippling river  
That glitters in the star-sheen ever ;  
O'er heathy dell, o'er forest brown,  
O'er many an upland, many a down,  
Beneath the stars, in wondrous flight,  
Britannia rides, and rules the night ;



A phantasm gleaming on the eye  
Inlaid with light on the dark sky.

## IV.

Ah ! could the traveller's eye discern  
Her gleaming axles as they burn,  
Or could their discs of spoky light  
Flash wondrous on his startled sight,  
Full well I ween his smitten soul  
Through staring, glaring eyes would roll,  
With hair erect, and curdled blood,  
Appalled and speechless where he stood :  
But not but on the Poet's dream,  
Pet son of mother Nature, gleam  
Those forms and fantasies that sweep  
The midnight of the moonless deep ;  
Not but to his adoring eye  
Revealed do all her wonders lie,

Not but to his prevailing quest  
'Their power and presence stand confest.

## V.

Oh! wondrous unimagined sight,  
Whose splendour like the Boreal light,  
Illumines heaven ; still onward flashing,  
Thy steeds with gleaming fetlocks dashing  
Darkness aside, and with their manes  
Floating like phosphorescent trains ;  
And with thy wondrous charioteer  
Who leans and guides them as they veer  
In whirling swiftmess ; and the glow  
Of that ethereal presence ! Lo !  
Engirt as with a haloed gleam,  
With eyes that like twin planets beam,  
Steeped in the sunset blaze, with brow  
Imperial and impassioned, now

Cased in the gleaming pomp of war,  
She sits majestic in her car.

## VI.

Her burning track is o'er the clouds  
Wherewith congenial night enshrouds  
The murky midlands. And her eyes  
Pierce with keen ken the dusky skies  
Far round her to the utmost land.  
Fiery and prompt with spear in hand,  
Imperial as a queen enthroned,  
She sits with all her splendour zoned ;  
And on that wondrous charioteer  
Still flashing speeds, while far and near  
Twinkling with towns that faintly glow  
Earth's shadowy vastness lours below.

## VII.

Lo ! on the dusky verge of night  
What streaks are these of sudden light ?

What mutterings in the gloom profound  
 Distantly yet distinctly sound ?  
 Some revel of the roaring might  
 Of tempest there disturbs the night.  
 Lo ! as the fiery chariot whirls  
 With proner sweep the gloom unfurls  
 In fiercer blazes, and the boom  
 Rolls heavier through the brooding gloom.  
 But as they near the bellowing Storms  
 That conflict of aerial forms  
 Ended, and far in northern night  
 The Demons are dispersed in flight.

## VIII.

And lo ! as the air-trampling steeds  
 Chafe on in burning swiftness, Leeds  
 In twinkling stillness, and with light  
 All studded o'er from height to height,

Bursts on their wondrous ken. Oh! rare  
On the dark hills embosomed there.  
Her wondrous lustre shone; and gleamed  
So still and beautiful, she seemed  
A constellation of the north  
Alighted on the lap of earth,  
Whose stars in gleaming beauty dwell  
All bright and burning where they fell.  
The ruffling clouds are rolled away  
That hide her from the glare of day,  
And in the dusky gloom of night  
Her busy hives are hid from sight,  
And nothing but the gleaming sheen  
Of all her silent lights is seen,  
To mortal eye.—But to the ken  
Of proud Britannia cometh then  
An apparition of the night  
Astounding to her queenly sight.

## IX.

High o'er his compeers as he stood  
Our good old Chief in musing mood,  
As yet uncertain what to say,  
Looked round upon their grim array,  
When, to the south above the hill,  
He saw a gleam of light that still  
Burned more intense the more he gazed,  
Till like a comet's flash it blazed  
With circumgirant sweep around  
All Leeds and all the hills that bound  
Her outline. And then reining up  
As on the rim of the great cup  
That holds her, with an eye of fire  
Britannia looks upon the dire  
And wonder-stricken meeting there,  
All set with great grim heads in air.

## X.

Eastward upon a bank of cloud  
Her hovering steeds pawing in proud  
Impatience champ their bits ; and down  
With queenly gesture and a frown  
Inquisitorial, but no word,  
She looked, but not a Giant stirred ;  
Save those upon the east, who turned  
Their heads a little to where burned  
The blazing car. Whereat she spoke  
A word, and with one flashing stroke  
Of his light lash her charioteer  
Twitched the proud chafers by the ear,  
And startling, with their hoofs of light  
They spurn the cloud, and to the right,  
Down-tending, sweep around that grim  
Congress once more, and on the dim  
Dark house-tops with illustrious light  
They settle, to the Chieftain's right.

## XI.

The fire-flash of Britannia's car  
Fell wondrous on each seam and scar  
Of the grim Giants ; and their Chief,  
In his illuminated grief  
And wonder, with storm-beaten front,  
Quails not beneath the searching brunt  
Of stern Britannia's gaze. With eye  
Significant and gesture high,  
With frown imperial, but with tone  
Melodious as Apollo's own,  
She asks of that storm-beaten Chief,  
In his illuminated grief  
And wonder, " Wherefore are ye here  
Sat gazing round with looks austere  
And dumb amazement ? Why are all  
Your posts forsaken while the pall  
Of night droops heavy, when the skies  
In sudden tempest may arise,



Assailing the grim piles whereof  
Ye are the guardians? Why above  
The housetops of the general town  
Do ye sit clustered with a frown  
Of brooding gloom o'er-clouded? Why  
With wonder in the general eye  
Of thy grim compeers dost thou stand  
As guardian of the clock, whose hand  
Down-creeping on the disc foretells  
In a brief space the clamouring bells  
With intermingling clash shall warn  
The sleep-locked millions of the morn?  
Have ye not in the general scheme  
A place and purpose to beseem  
With faithfulness, if not with pride,  
To follow and therein abide?  
And why then with great glaring  
eyes  
Do ye sit staring at the skies,

Chafing your haunches on the wedges  
Of these uncomfortable ridges?"

## XII.

With eye undazzled by the blaze  
Illustrious, and far-gleaming rays  
Of his Imperial Queen, that Chief  
Seized to unbosom his great grief  
On the blest moment, seeming sent  
By Heaven with provident intent  
And benign purpose. With calm brow  
Tempered with reverence he now  
Replied ; and all his compeers glistened  
With light illustrious as they listened.  
On their sad brows and shoulders high  
In ridges packed along the sky  
In gleams it fell ; and where it played  
It passed like sunshine through the shade

Of their aerial shapes which shone  
With gleaming glory not their own.

## XIII.

With outstretched arm that Chieftain high  
With slow grand gesture led the eye  
Of proud Britannia to survey  
His legions in their grim array.  
And with a voice whose hollow tone  
Rung deep as melancholy's own,  
He gave to her indiction stern  
A calm, a sad, a proud return.  
“Look on those legions, haughty Queen,  
And tell me if thine eye hath seen  
In all the wide wild realms of night  
A nobler or a braver sight.  
Look at their dark locks as they hang  
Like midnight torrents that have sprang

In one black mass of streaky gloom  
 From the rock summit; how they loom  
 Terrible in their glory there  
 Illuminated by the glare  
 Of thy illustrious presence!—Oh,  
 Askest thou why we come and go  
 In desolation far and near?  
 Askest thou why with looks austere  
 We sit and gaze upon the sky  
 With sad and supplicating eye?  
 Ask me not wherefore. For in fell  
 Dark compact all the powers of hell  
 Are leagued to smite us. In an hour  
 The badge and glory of our power  
 Is wrested with malignant jeer  
 From our dishonoured brows. And  
     here,  
 In sorrow more than anger now,  
 All kneeling at thy feet we bow

Our threatened heads, to bid thee stay  
The doom that with its black dismay  
Yawns grave-like to engulph us."

## XIV.

And

With sudden promptness all his band,  
With endless shuffling of their feet,  
And jamming crossways in the street  
Of their great shins, now kneel before  
Britannia.—She, with a roar  
Of most unqueenly laughter, then  
Turned her impassioned glance again  
From the great Chief, who like a child  
Kneeled half in grief and wonder wild.  
And as he kneeled with all his bands  
In stricken wonder, in her hands  
She hid her face, and poured anew  
Loud laughter all the wide air through.

And laughing as she tried to speak,  
 With bright tears gleaming down her cheek  
 She looked upon the Chief, and then,  
 Mirth-overpowered, she laughed again.

## XV.

But when that final roar was over,  
 With a strong effort to recover  
 Her gravity, she spoke again,  
 Responsive to the Chieftain then :—  
 “ Tell me first what this fierce mishap  
 Consists in : ” here her martial cap  
 She re-adjusted, and her spear  
 Caught up where it had fallen near,  
 Against her chariot side, in her  
 Late mirth which made the wide air stir :  
 “ Tell me first what this fierce mishap  
 Consists in ; and if from the gap,

Or grave, so frightful, ye may be  
 Rescued alive, I'll rescue ye."

Whereat the Chieftain, with upraised  
 Hands, half incredulous as he gazed,  
 Yet willing to believe, poured out  
 Fond gratitude, ungrieved by doubt.

"Blessed by thy benign aspect,  
 Too gracious Queen ! in glory decked  
 Be thy proud brows for ever ! Oh !  
 If thou wilt be our friend, what foe  
 In hell-born artifice succinct,  
 But shall in watching be outwinked  
 By thy brave wisdom ? Oh, poor  
 fools !

Put up your vain mechanic tools,  
 Nor with malignant mock deride,  
 Prospectively, the towering pride  
 Of our majestic brows : ye shall  
 Yourselves be thrust against the wall

By power supreamer than your own.  
 Ruler of Ocean ! be it known  
 There is a league that doth in dire  
 And plotting brotherhood conspire  
 By arts and innovations vile  
 On which we would contemptuous smile,  
 But that they threat our glory : there  
 Works in men's bosoms everywhere,  
 A settled and supreme desire  
 To burn in fierce and raging fire  
 The smoke that with magnificent power  
 Bursts from our proud brows hour by  
     hour,  
 And scatters over half the town  
 A rich and sooty largesse down.  
 The ingrates, in their compact vile,  
 Exhaust their brains with every wile  
 Of dire mechanic arts ; and now  
 They have arranged the when and how,



And comes not sundawn but they shall  
Smite with fierce hammers every wall  
That vaults the roaring fire ; and there  
They shall with cool deliberate care  
Fix their dire apparatus. We  
Are met to ask if this shall be."

## XVI.

Still as he spoke, Britannia's eye  
Flashed with surprise more fiercely high ;  
And as he closed, her lip and brow  
Are gathered—not in laughter now—  
In stern contempt, a good deal mixed  
With doubt and wonder, as she fixed  
Her paramount and eagle eye  
On the tall spectres of the sky  
All knelt around. Slowly she turned  
Along their ranks a look that burned

Into their inmost essence ; then  
 Travelled that burning gaze again  
 From head to head until it came  
 Back to the Chief ; and there its flame  
 Rested, and from her lips the tide  
 Of utterance burst in power and pride.  
 “ Meddling, immeasurable fools,  
 Whence come ye, or in what dame-  
     schools

Have ye been taught to put about  
 Your addle heads—I greatly doubt—  
 With questions such as this ? Have ye  
 No occupation but to be  
 Met here on such a night as this,  
 Talking such rant as, indeed, is  
 The utterest, absurdest folly  
 That ever made Truth melancholy ?  
 Indeed, Sirs, but this mad convention  
 Calls for severest reprehension ;

And but for its absurdness, I  
Would rate ye round the blessed sky.  
That such a parcel of great noodles,  
With as much brains, perhaps, as  
poodles,  
Must agitate, and make a fuss,  
With—without ever asking us !  
And you, their Chief, pulling a face  
Of such a length a fiddle case  
Were brevity compared with it.  
And over what? Why, the mad fit  
Of the most raging lunatic  
Could never, when the moon was sick,  
Have worked up in his yeasty brain  
A more absurd, or a more vain,  
More mad, or idiotic thought,  
Than this which in your heads you've got.  
Who set your wisdoms up, I pray,  
In midnight council and array

Upon the house-tops of the town,  
 To settle what new up or down  
 Shall be transacted in the world ?  
 I bless the blessed hour that whirled  
 My chariot in your midst, if but  
 To tell you that your smutch and smut  
 Is doomed, and shall be swept away  
 From the fair town that day by day  
 Its sulphurous cloud disfigures. Ye  
 May quake in your insanity  
 With dreams of ruin ; but the course  
 Of Nations with a sleepless force  
 Rolls free and flowing on. The tide  
 Of rolling Time shall turn aside  
 At no fool's beck ; but in the sweep  
 Of its appointed track shall keep  
 Its onward course for ever. Yea,  
 The thunder of its sweeping way  
 Shall swallow up and shall bow down  
 The tyrant ; and his throne and crown,

Submerged in that unfathomed river,  
 Shall perish from the earth for ever.

## XVII.

“ And who are ye, great groaning fools,  
 Like children over-taught at schools,  
 To think, and meddle, and perplex  
 Their sapient heads with truths that vex  
 The baffled wisdom of all Time ?  
 Who are ye, pray, who with sublime  
 Enactment shall decide if this,  
 Or that, that never was amiss,  
 Shall be put right in such a way,  
 Wrong-headedly, that night and day  
 It shall but breed confusion ? I,  
 May it please your Highnesses, enjoy  
 A power and a foreknowledge, too,  
 Please you, a great deal more than you.  
 I know what is in hand, and yet

I'm not disposed to fume and fret,  
And agitate, and make a noise  
Enough to fright the very skies.  
I know ye, and I know your master's  
Intentions, but of no disasters  
About to smite ye do I know  
One tittle. There is no such blow  
As this ye fancy they prepare  
To smite your proud brows bald and bare.  
'Tis true the black and inky dies  
Of the long locks ye so much prize  
Cannot continue of the hue  
They are of, save they have their due  
Of daily powder. But the fool  
Ought to be whipped two miles to school,  
Who therefore fancies, or supposes,  
That forthwith all your glory closes,  
And that grim ruin shall invest  
Your brows dishonoured of their crest

Of smutch and smut, whose sulphury puffing  
Sets half the town to sneeze and coughing.  
But though ye lose your devil's dye  
Of black that so begrimes the sky,  
What, then, is all up with you when  
You send the devil home again,  
Out of a place where he should never  
Have set his foot, far less endeavour  
To fix his residence? Have ye  
Such satisfaction when that he  
Has set his mark upon ye, all  
That is not of his sooty thrall  
Is doom and is disaster else?

## XVIII.

"My friends, you will beware of false  
Philosophy. Her pedant pride  
Disdains that monitor and guide

Whose counsels in the heart can teach  
 A wisdom far beyond her reach.  
 She with her plummet line goes forth  
 To sound the sea ; she measures  
       earth,

Its mountains, by her inches ; yea,  
 She dips for the remotest ray,  
 And when she catches it she cries,  
 ‘ Behold the wonders of the skies !’  
 But in her heart she knoweth not  
 The Spirit who those wonders wrought,  
 But like an idiot in the sun  
 She basks in unbelief. But one  
 Who hath intelligence will not  
 Reject the wonder that is wrought ;  
 But from his heart he will inform  
 It with a sense and feeling warm,  
 A worship that in love goes forth  
 Like sunshine over heaven and earth.



That wisdom knoweth its own kin ;  
And from without and from within  
Finds attestation and delight,  
As different as is day from night  
From rigid science with her torch  
Examining the temple's porch.

## XIX.

“ And ye, poor spectres of the night,  
Ye too are symbols ; and the fright  
That hath possessed you typifies  
The fear wherewith the wicked flies  
When none pursues him. Go your ways,  
And know that when the sunbright rays  
Beat on your smokeless brows, they shall  
Induce a golden hue o'er all  
That now is black as night. In pride  
And wonder ye shall shake aside

Your lustrous ringlets as they flow  
 All glorious in their golden glow.  
 Ye shall remember then how here  
 Ye met in wonder and in fear ;  
 And how in mirth and melancholy  
 I have rebuked ye for your folly.  
 Farewell then. Sure am I your shins  
 Have now done penance for your sins,  
 Kneeling upon the cold hard street,  
 Sufficient. Get upon your feet,  
 And to your posts before the morn  
 Is sounded on the cock's shrill horn."

## XX.

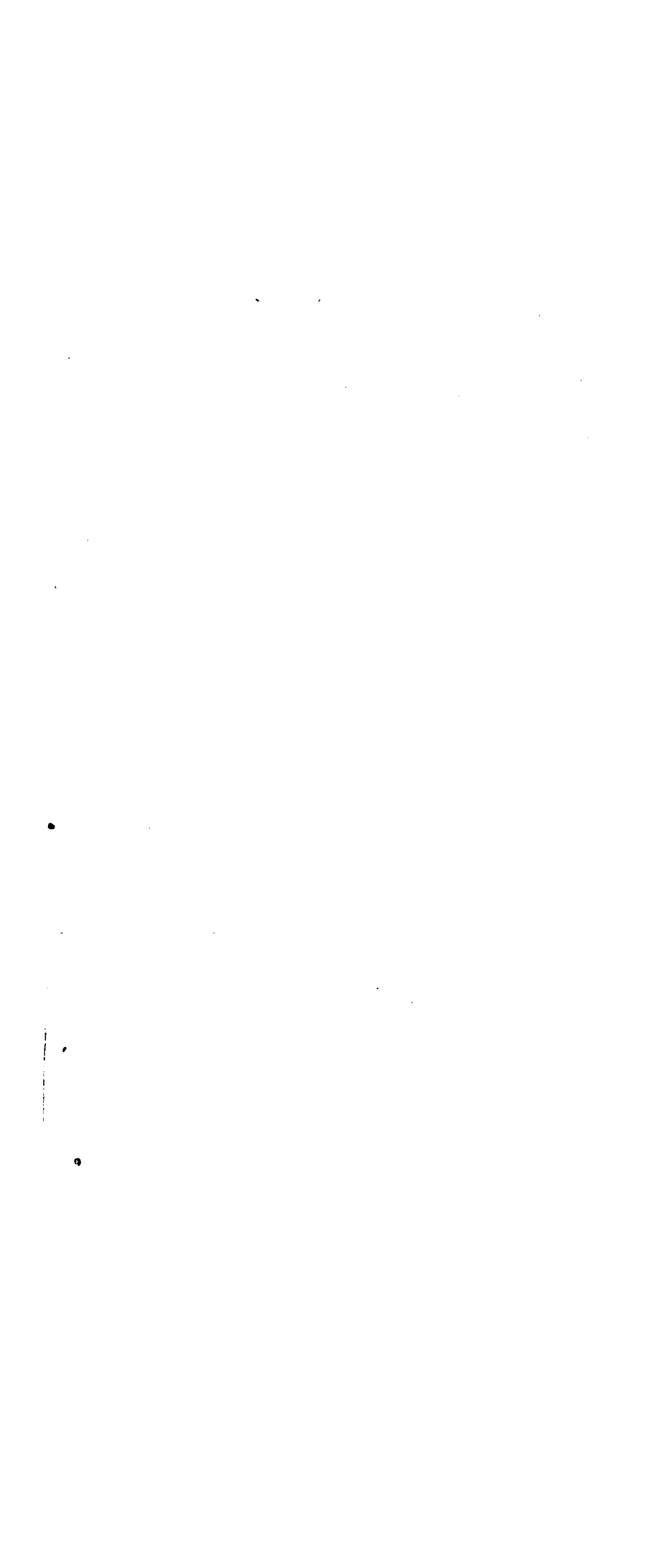
And like a passing meteor's ray  
 Her bright steeds bounded on their way,  
 Spurning the darkness in their flight,  
 And vanishing in northern night.

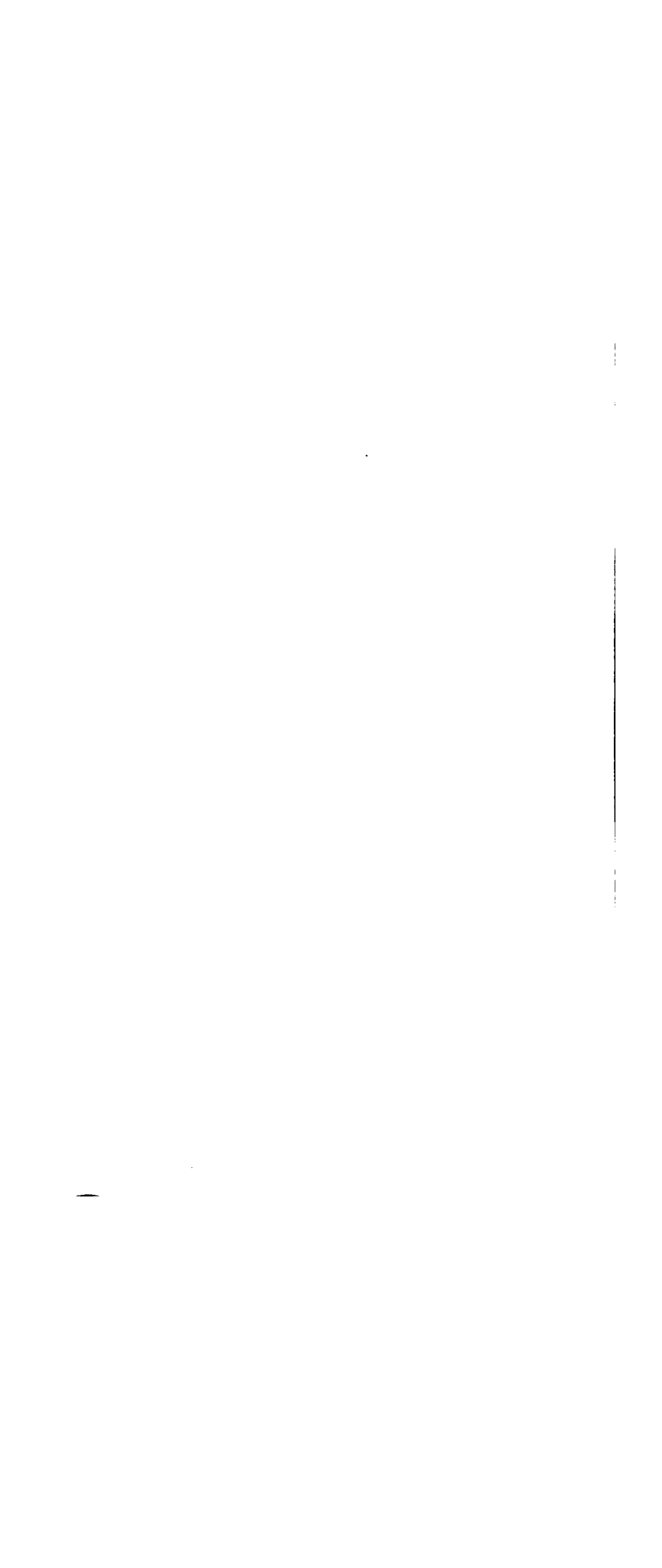
A moment gleaming on the eye  
Her blazing buckler and her high  
Imperial helmet flashed, and then  
Far shooting into night again  
From out of which she came she  
    passed,  
And left the Giants kneeling vast  
In wordless wonder round. First rose  
Their Chieftain, and his great eye glows  
With wild delight as he his hair  
Shook by the middle in mid air.  
And as he stood each Giant then  
Upstarted to his feet again,  
And to their Chief responding there  
Each Giant with his hand his hair  
Grasped by the middle of its length,  
And waved around with all his strength ;  
And thrice as with one voice, on high  
They shout exulting to the sky.

## XXI.

But ere that burst of wild delight,  
Thrice told, died in the cold gray light  
That overspread the east, a shrill  
Responsive trump sounds from a hill  
Behind them westward. As its sound  
Struck on the Giant spectres round,  
Their congress in a moment shewed  
A disposition to explode ;  
And with a rush to left and right  
They, in the silence of the night,  
Have vanished, like a vision wild  
That frets the slumber of a child.

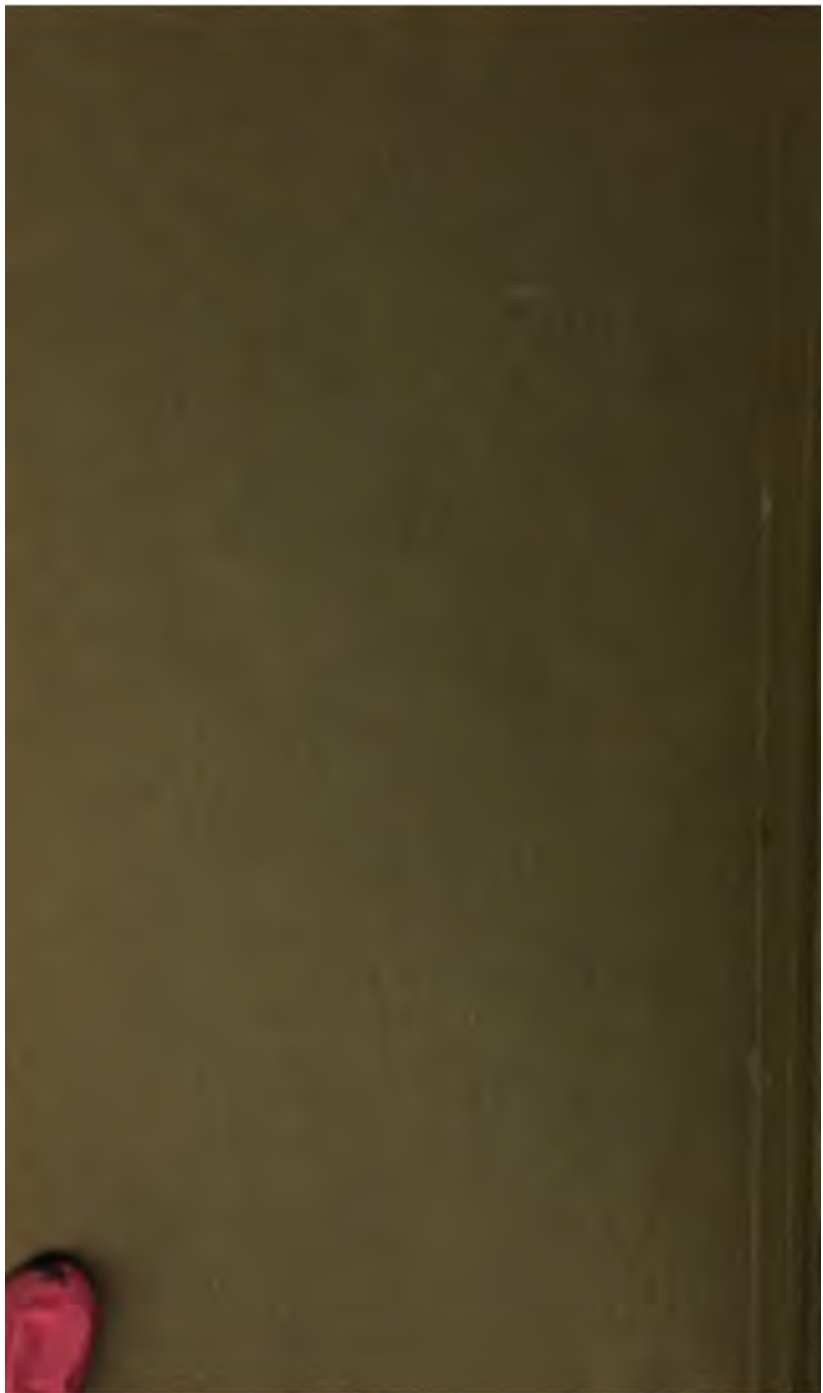
*a*  
C. 11



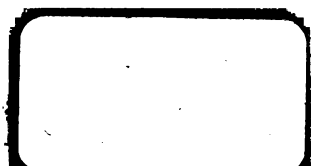








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